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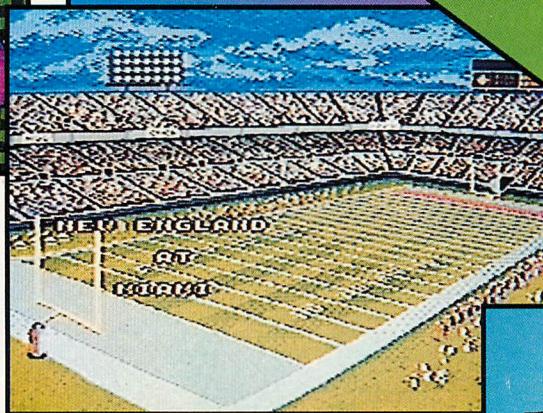
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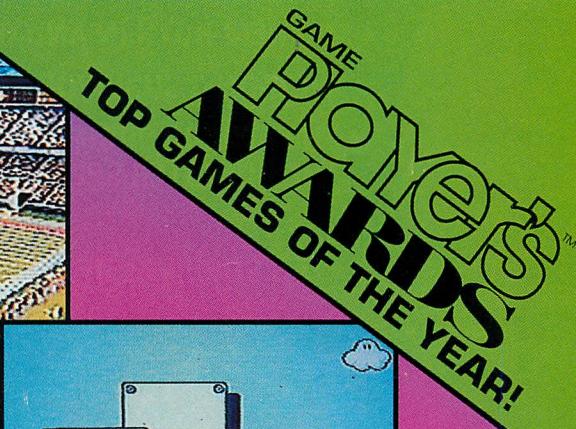
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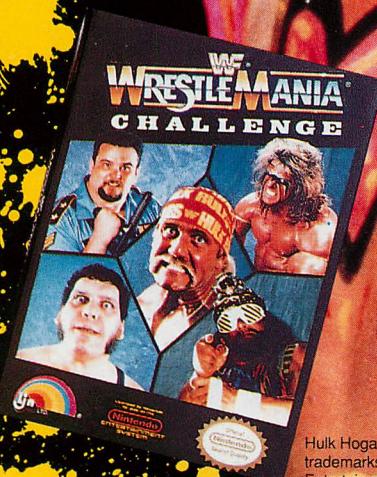
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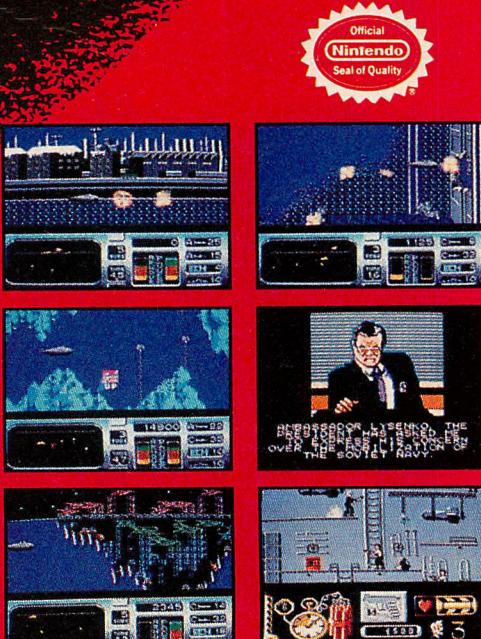
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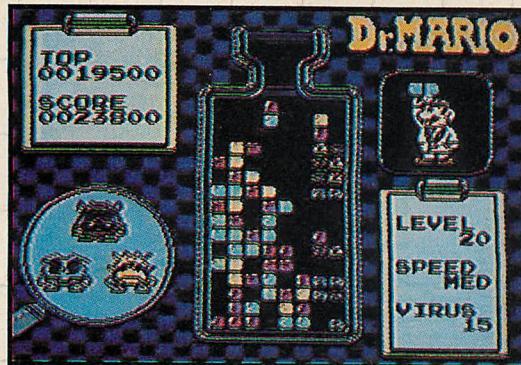
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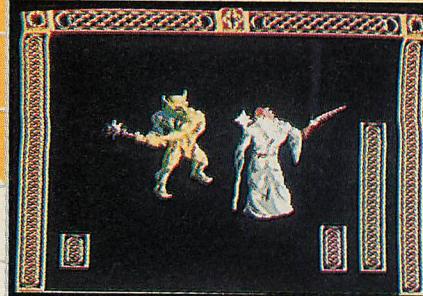
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STUFF



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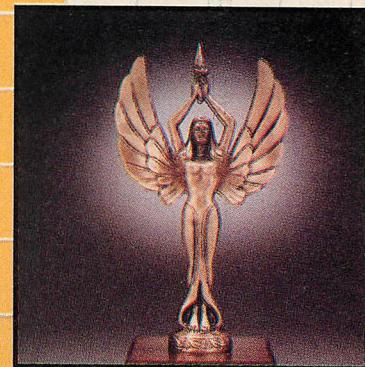
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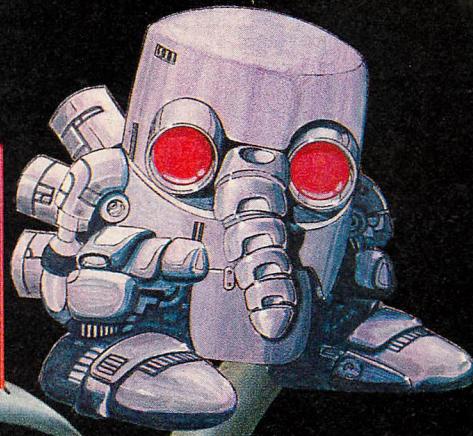
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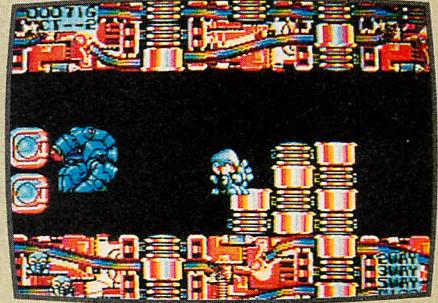
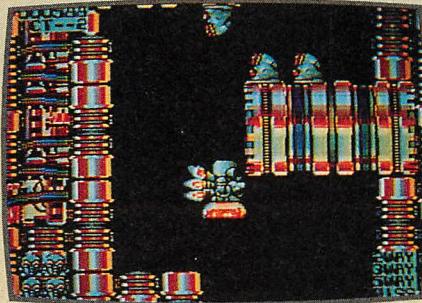
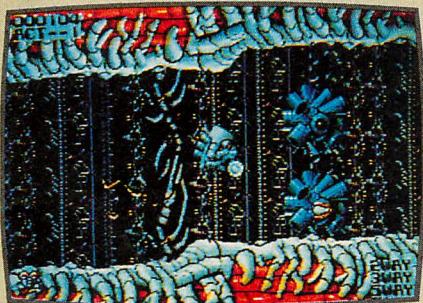
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The EDITOR'S VIEW

Our October 1990 issue carried an in-depth article on QSound, a radical new recording technology that can make music or sound effects seem to come from anywhere in a room — even from behind your head. Best of all, QSound works with any two-speaker stereo system or stereo TV; it doesn't need special equipment or extra speakers.

As we reported in October, Nintendo has committed at least \$3 million to license QSound for use in future videogames. Nintendo will probably introduce QSound as part of a new accessory for either the existing 8-bit NES or the new 16-bit Super Famicom — or both. Our October article included an illustration of what such a device might look like.

But there was one question we couldn't answer in that article: How well does QSound *really* work? Back then, QSound wasn't available for evaluation.

Now it is. In November, QSound made its public debut on Madonna's new greatest-hits album, *The Immaculate Collection*. All 17 tracks (15 old hits and two new songs) were remixed to include QSound.

The verdict? We think QSound is a hit!

The effects are surprisingly dramatic. For example, the song "Lucky Star" begins with a trilling synthesizer that seems to make two complete orbits of your head; in "Rescue Me" you'll hear thunder and rain coming from the sky, even if you're sitting indoors; and, in what is perhaps the most startling effect on the album, "Vogue" opens with Madonna's voice snarling "What are you lookin' at?" — from directly behind you! (Indeed, in *my* living room, Madonna seems to be standing three feet behind my back — even when my back is pressed against a solid wall.)

These are just a few of the more spectacular QSound effects on *The Immaculate Collection*. Throughout the

album, music seems to float about the room, as if you were sitting in the middle of the band. Sometimes the music actually seems to throb *inside* your head. It's an eerie feeling.

QSound isn't perfect, however. It appears to be very sensitive to where you're sitting and how the speakers are arranged. The speakers should be spaced a few feet apart, level with each other, and approximately level with your ears. (If your speakers are sitting on the floor, try tilting them slightly upward.) And you should be sitting halfway between the speakers, about as far from them as they are from each other.

QSound is so dependent on room acoustics that you can miss the effects entirely if either you or the speakers are only a foot or two out of position. There seems to be a learning curve as well; don't expect to hear the most dramatic effects immediately. It seems to take an hour or so of listening before your ears get fully "tuned in" to QSound.

Some people say they can't hear QSound at all, even in a proven listening environment. Others say they can hear partial QSound — the music projects forward from the speakers, but never gets behind their head. Because QSound relies on psychoacoustic phenomena, not everyone will experience it in exactly the same way.

Nevertheless, we're more excited than ever about the videogame possibilities of QSound. We can't wait to hear the first QSound spaceships engaging in dogfights near the ceiling, or QSound monsters thrashing it out from corner to corner around the room.

By the way, if you want to hear QSound and you're not a Madonna fan, watch for new releases from Paula Abdul, Janet Jackson, Bon Jovi, Julian Lennon, Stevie Nicks, Sting, Richie Sambora, Wilson Phillips, Freddie Jackson, Imana, Gerardo, and Europe. These are just some of the recording artists who are exploring this new domain of multi-dimensional sound.

Tom R. Halfhill
Editor, *Game Player's*

GP



THE HOTTEST TICKET IN TOWN.

Get ready for the blockbuster of the year. IKARI III, THE RESCUE. The hottest ticket in town for your Nintendo system.

It's the end of the 20th century. A worldwide economic recession wreaks havoc with the nation and the planet. The impending threat of anarchy has given rise to a secret vice organization called "Crime Ghost" led by the mastermind "Faust", who's dangerously poised to take over the world with his diabolic strategy.

There is one president who has initiated a plan to wipe out the association, and he has summoned you, the incredible Ikari Warriors Paul and Vince, to penetrate the enemy hideout and rescue his daughter Elise. But first, you must fight the Crime

Ghost and attempt to destroy them all. To do this, you will use your undersea scuba tactics and guerilla fighting power. Fire machine guns, throw grenades and kick some butt using your own brute strength. Add to that superior martial arts skills using round house and jump kicks, punches and more. Only the Ikari Warriors can save the world from chaos!

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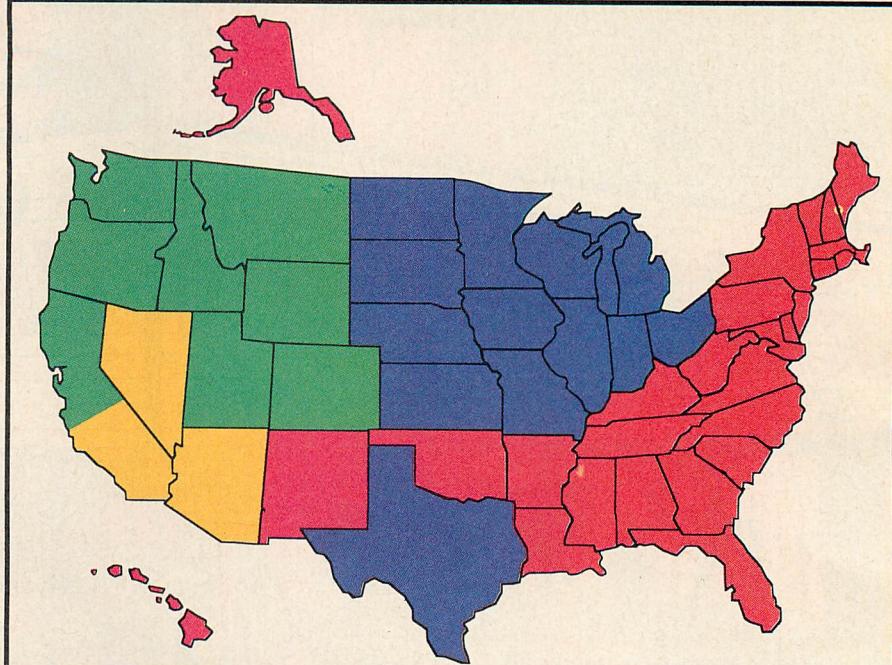
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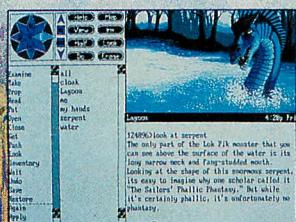
Following high school graduation, Ernie Eaglebeak had two career options: Dragon Tending or Sorcery.

Dragon Tending demanded interminably long days roasting under the acrid breath of temperamental dragons in holding pits of dirt and grime.

Sorcery offered a four-year romp through Sorcerer University — four years of outrageous frat parties, scantily-clad co-eds and reckless behavior.

Sorcerer U. also meant plenty of adventure — from battling dragons in the Simulation Lab with only arcane spells as weapons; to grappling with zesty females in real life using more, um, natural tools.

Tough choice.



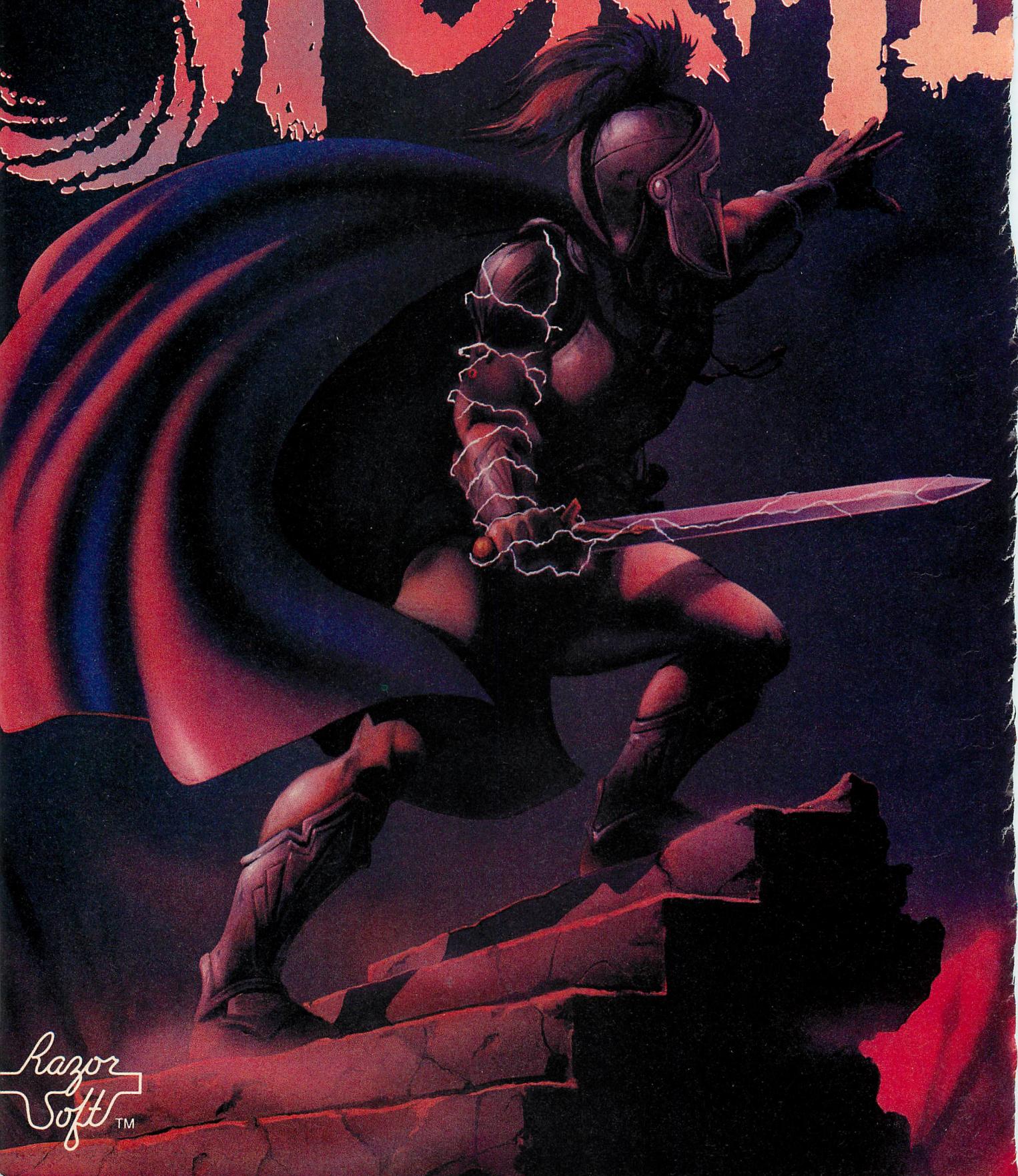
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Spellcasting 101: Sorcerers Get All The Girls is yet another bawdy, irreverent graphic adventure from Steve Meretzky, author of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, *Leather Goddesses of Phobos* and *Zork Zero*. Despite the presence of "naughty" and "nice" modes, this game is not recommended for those who a) have weak hearts, b) believe sex is a four-letter word, or c) think college students, no matter what universe they live in, spend their free time studying.

STORM



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Beautiful, Entombed Princesses.

CHILL TO...

Psychotic, Death-Dealing Sorcerers.

SPILL TO...

Deranged, Draconian Firedogs.

RUN LIKE H----- FROM...

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Hogoblins.

"Spent hours searching for magical treasures . . . even longer
trying to use them." —Trey Green, Game Reviewer

4 Megabit 16 Bit Graphics

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This Game Has Not Yet Been Rated.

"Battled awesome monsters!"—Aaron Van Stavern, Game Tester

"If you liked 'Ghouls,' 'Stormlord' will blow you away!"
—Barrett Ryals, Game Tester

Back to the Future 2 & 3

I have discovered a way to warp to the year 1875 in *Back to the Future 2 & 3* for Nintendo. At the title screen, hold down the A and B buttons and press Select. Some scrambled letters come up on the screen. Arrange the letters to spell "Flux capacitor is the power." The title screen comes up again. Press Start. A different story comes up and a bird drops you into the year 1875.

David Johnson
Ohio

Thanks for the tip. But be careful when entering that code. The correct code, as you say, is "Flux capacitor is the power." But in the Back to the Future movies, the actual device was called a flux capacitor.

Gargoyle's Quest

I just received *Gargoyle's Quest* for the Game Boy, and I enjoy playing it. But I seem to be having trouble getting into Darkoann's castle. Please help me.

Philip Balsman
Missouri

There are many passageways that lead to dead ends, so don't be fooled. Take the cave entrance directly to the right. Even though it looks just like the other passageways on the inside and out, you'll reach the castle at the other end.



Do you have any questions about your favorite video-games or computer games? Or do you have any hints and tips to share with your fellow game players? If so, write to The Tip Sheet, *Game Player's*, P.O. Box 29364, Greensboro, NC 27429. Due to the volume of mail we receive, we regret that we cannot reply individually by mail to game questions.

Les Manley in: Search for The King

I have *Les Manley in: Search for The King* for PCs, but I'm stuck. I know I'm supposed to distract the maid to get the skeleton key in the Las Vegas Casino Hotel. The problem is that I don't know how. What should I do?

Dan Sayson
Pennsylvania

This is an easy one: Lie down on the bed and mess it up. The maid will come in to make it up again, and you can snatch the key from her cart in the hall while she's occupied.

Maniac Mansion

I have piles of questions about *Maniac Mansion*. How do you get into the garage? How do you get the radio out of the pool? Where are the instructions to Ed's commando kit? Where's the sponge? What is the grate outside used for? What's the grate in the pantry used for? Where are the pieces to the radio in Fred's room? Do the candles in the dining room have any use?

Michael Freeborn
Alberta, Canada

To get into the garage, use the Hunk-o-Matic to build your muscles. To get the radio out of the pool, use the water valve under the house to drain the pool. The instructions will be delivered by the postman — but you've got to grab the package before Ed does.

The sponge is in the bathroom, of course. Use it to mop up the film developer that leaks through the grate in the pantry and onto the ground under the house. The radio can be repaired by installing the radio tube you should have found in the living room. Only Bernard has the know-how to install the tube. And finally, no, the candles don't have a use — but don't they add some nice atmosphere?

THESE PIRATES HAVE TONGUES AS SHARP AS THEIR SWORDS.



Lucasfilm™ Games' swashbuckling new graphic adventure lets you trade insults with some of the saltiest seamen to ever sail the seven seas.

In *The Secret of Monkey Island*, you'll sling one-liners with a fast-talking used ship salesman, a sarcastic swordmaster, a wisecracking corpse, and a prisoner whose breath would stop a horse. You'll also hunt for buried treasure, chase after a beautiful woman, and—perhaps—unravel one of the twistiest plots in the history of adventure gaming.

You're short, broke, clueless and friendless.

And you've just arrived on Mélée Island seeking fame and fortune. Explaining to anyone who'll listen that you want to be a pirate.

Being the easy-going types they are, your new pirate pals invite you into the club. Just as



soon as you've completed three *tiny* trials.

Among other things, you'll need to sedate some piranha poodles, burglarize the governor's mansion, and do business with the scum of the earth. And if that's not enough, you'll have to figure out whether the 300-pound voodoo priestess covets your rubber chicken, fetid fish, pack of breath mints, or...

If the brigands don't grab you, the graphics will.

Lucasfilm Games set today's graphic standards with games like *Loom* and *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. Now *The Secret of Monkey Island* ups the standards a few more notches with stunning 256-color VGA graphics (16-color EGA version also available), proportionally scaled animated characters, and cinematic pans and camera angles.

Our acclaimed point 'n' click interface

has been improved even more. So have our sound effects, which are backed by a captivating calypso and reggae music track.

Enter the Monkey Island Treasure Hunt and win a FREE Carnival Caribbean cruise!

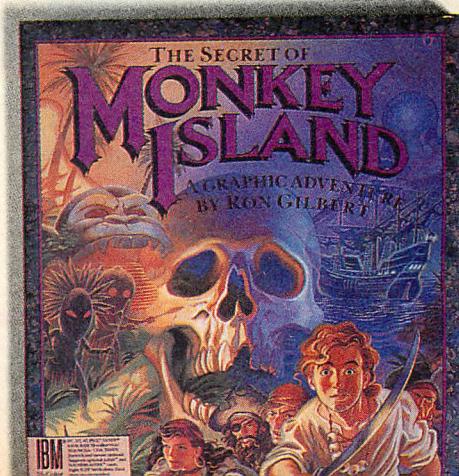
If you can solve a few sneaky puzzles in a special demo of *The Secrets of Monkey Island*, you might just win one of the sweetest prizes since Captain Kidd's treasure chest. A Carnival Cruise for two, one of a hundred AdLib™ sound cards, or one of hundreds more prizes! You'll find the demo and complete rules in specially-marked boxes of 3M diskettes. Or send a self-addressed, stamped disk mailer to: Monkey Demo, PO Box 10228, San Rafael, CA 94912.

So act fast, think fast, and enter fast. Because while playing *The Secret of Monkey Island* is an adventure, winning the Treasure Hunt is a real trip.



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Phantasy Star II

In *Phantasy Star II* for the Sega Genesis, the hint book says to stock up on Star Mist, but I can only find two. Also, how can I find the elusive Moondew?

Adam Treusch
Manitoba, Canada

These items can occasionally be found in dungeons, but you can also steal them using Shir, the thief. Take her into any Items Shop (it doesn't matter if the shop doesn't offer the items), and walk in and out until she steals something. What she steals depends on her experience level. To get the items you want, you might have to advance a few levels first.



Use Shir the thief to steal special items that you'll need.

Shinobi

I purchased *Shinobi* last Christmas. I don't know which weapon you use to kill the big ninja at the end of level 2. How do you kill him?



And how do you use the magic and weapons you pick up after the bonus stage? It looks like lightning — what is it?

Chris
Tennessee

Since the boss of level 2 is a helicopter, we're assuming you mean the boss of level 1-2, who is a big ninja. The ninja throws fire that zeroes in on your current position. Stay on the left, and just before he throws the fire, jump high to attract it to the ceiling. Then crawl under the flames to get close to the ninja. Stand four or five steps away from him and throw darts into his eyes. The timing is difficult, so make every shot count.

To use the lightning magic, you must first defeat a certain number of enemies. When the ninja magic symbol at the top of the screen starts flashing, the magic is ready to use. It summons forth a lightning bolt that kills all enemies on the screen.

Super C

To get safely through the Earthquake Zone of *Super C* for Nintendo, run quickly to the far right of the screen while the Babalu is being destroyed. Move back slightly, then move back and jump immediately into the Earthquake Zone.

Once you're on the ground, keep running and firing all the way to the end. The ground will cave in behind you, so you won't get trapped. Only the attackers will be swallowed by the earth.

Xiao Q. Tian
Massachusetts

That's a great tip for *Snake and Mad Dog* fans. Thanks!

Alex Kidd in High-Tech World

I have been a fan of the Sega Master System for a long time. I've finished most of my games except for *Alex Kidd in High-Tech World*. I don't know how to get out of the city. I need a travel pass, but all I ever get is a fake one. Please, please tell me how to get a real pass.

Mike Quimby
Wisconsin

Try praying at the church 100 times.

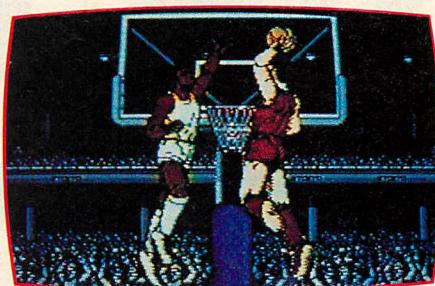
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IT'S ULTIMATE BASKETBALL™

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Want close ups? Go for the slam or a 3-pointer and let the full-screen animation blow you away!

When your men start to drag, you can substitute some fresh blood. It's all jam packed into one NES cartridge, pro-basketball at your fingertips!



Zoom into the action



Be a part of the action—not just a spectator



See your shots-up close and personal



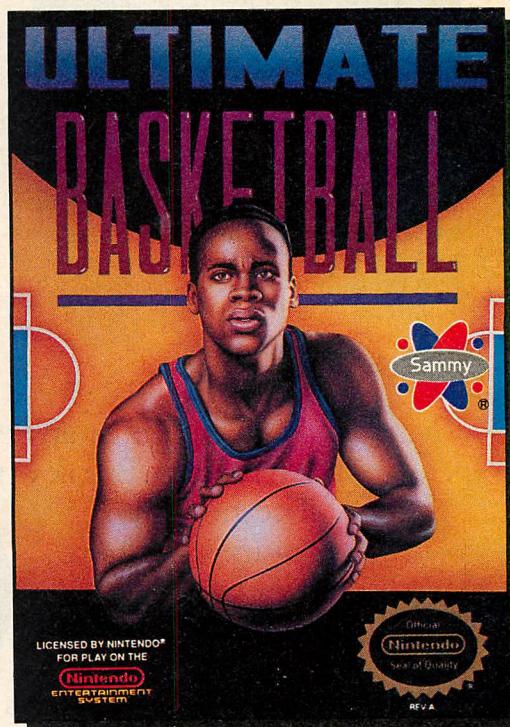
You control full court movement



Pick your starting line-up



Team up with a friend against the computer



American Sammy Corporation

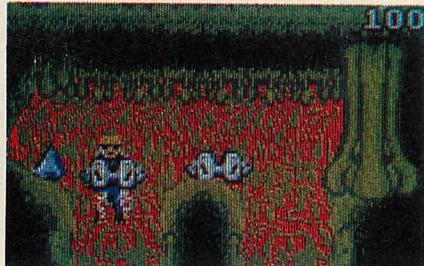
2421 205th St., Suite D-104, Torrance, CA 90501
PHONE: (213) 320-7167 • GAME TIPS: (213) 320-7362

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The Following Be Too Graphic



Why mow the lawn when you can bomb oncoming planes and destroy secret military bases in nine action missions with **BLUE LIGHTNING**.



After dinner, you can always battle maggots, blood-flies and drools in the dangerous 8 player game - **SLIME WORLD**.



RYGAR, the 2 player arcade hit that pits you against ferocious beasts, hideous demons or worse, your best friend.



PAPERBOY. Fling papers at non-subscribers, race your bicycle on people's lawns — in other words, the ultimate afterschool job.



RAMPAGE. Become a 60 ft. beast, demolish buildings and eat tanks as an army attempts to destroy you. Up to 4 players can take part in the destruction.



Encounter loathsome beings. Escape from horrible creatures. It's you against the evil empire in the game of **GAUNTLET**.

Warm up the brain cells. Condition those fingers. Break out the antacid.

The new Lynx cartridges are here.

Twelve of the roughest, toughest, most challenging game cartridges in the Cosmos.

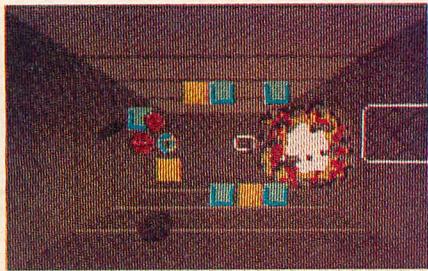


And now you can play them on earth. In fact, anywhere on earth. Because the Lynx is the world's first portable, color video game system.

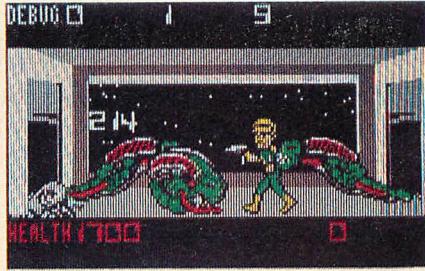
With its totally unique 16 bit graphics engine,



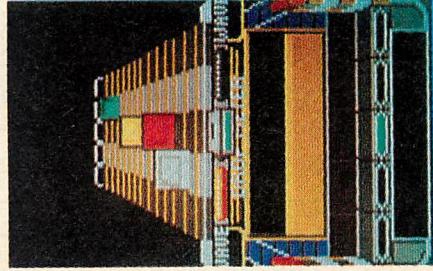
5 Scenes May Be Graphic For Adults.



ROBO SQUASH. The ultimate paddle game. The goal is to squash the enemy and line up four globes in a row to win. But be careful, three splats and you're out.



XENOPHOBIE. Trapped in a space station, you must destroy the aliens. Side-scrolling adventure for up to 4 players.



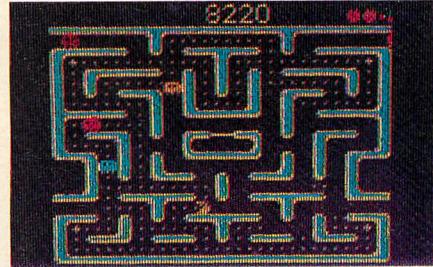
KLAX. Maneuver your platform. Catch the falling bricks. Stack 'em for points. And try to do it all before your dad asks to borrow it.



ROAD BLASTER. Drive and avoid mines, exploding towers and enemy vehicles for points and make it through 50 levels. Great to play in the back of the car.



It's a galactic shoot out between you and aliens in the 4 player game **ZARLOR MERCENARY**. Your only hope is to kill them all or break for lunch.



Help **MS. PACMAN** escape the marauding ghosts by guiding her through multiple mazes gobbling up dots, energizers, fruits and pretzels.

the Lynx lets you play arcade quality games that really look like arcade games. In 4 channel sound. Play by yourself. With one opponent. Two opponents. Three opponents. Or you can even link up with seven other players on certain games.

So if you don't already own a Lynx,

you better hurry. Because they're going fast. And so are all these game cartridges.

Visit the videogame section in your favorite store now.

Before they're wiped out.



PLAYERS

WORLD



GAME PLAYER'S ANNUAL AWARDS — 1990

For gamers, 1990 was an exciting year. In every format — Nintendo, Sega Genesis, NEC TurboGrafx-16, Amiga, PC compatibles, and hand-held systems such as the Game Boy and Atari Lynx — we've seen exceptional games that set new standards in the field of electronic entertainment.

In recognition of these outstanding achievements, the editors of *Game Player's* are pleased to announce the annual Game Player's Awards for 1990. In early January, trophies for all of the major categories were presented to the publishers and manufacturers of the award-winning products at the Winter Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. We also presented Excellence Awards for products that exemplify the high level of quality and ingenuity we've seen over the past year.

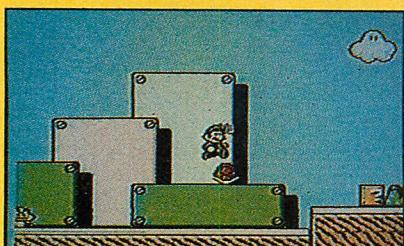
Consider this list of award-winners a guide to the best electronic games that came out in 1990. You can't go wrong with any of them.

NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

Nintendo Game of the Year

Super Mario Bros. 3

Nintendo of America



Super Mario Bros. 3

Best Arcade Action Game

Mega Man 3

Capcom

Best Fantasy

Role-Playing Game

Final Fantasy

Nintendo of America

Best Graphics

Adventure Game

Maniac Mansion

Jaleco

Best Puzzle Game

Dr. Mario

Nintendo of America

Best Sports Game

Baseball Simulator 1.000

Culture Brain

Best Strategy Game

Solstice

CSG Imagesoft

Best War Game

Shingen the Ruler

Hot-B

Game Player's NES Excellence Awards

A Boy and His Blob

Absolute Entertainment

Castlevania III: Dracula's Curse

Konami

The Chessmaster

Hi-Tech Expressions

Chip 'N' Dale: Rescue Rangers

Capcom

Crystallis

SNK

Double Dragon II: The Revenge

Acclaim

Dragon's Lair

CSG Imagesoft

Dragon Warrior II

Enix America

The Immortal

Electronic Arts

Ironsword: Wizards

& Warriors II

Acclaim

Jack Nicklaus' 18 Greatest Holes

of Major Championship Golf

Konami

Jordan vs. Bird: One on One

Milton Bradley

WIN WIN WIN

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SEGA GENESIS
SEGA GENESIS
SEGA GENESIS

GAME

Player's

THE LEADING MAGAZINE OF VIDEO AND COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

CLUE
CRATERMAZE
SHINOBI
CODE NAME: VIPER
SNOOPY
BLOOD MONEY
EXTERMINATOR
KWIRK
DEJA VU II
EVERT & LENDL
KNIGHTS OF LEGEND
REMOTE CONTROL
BATTLES
OF NAPOLEON
RIVER CITY RANSOM
MILITARY MADNESS

PLUS:

NINTENDO® WORLD
CHAMPIONSHIPS!

**WARP ZONES
REVEALED!**

Super Mario

WIN

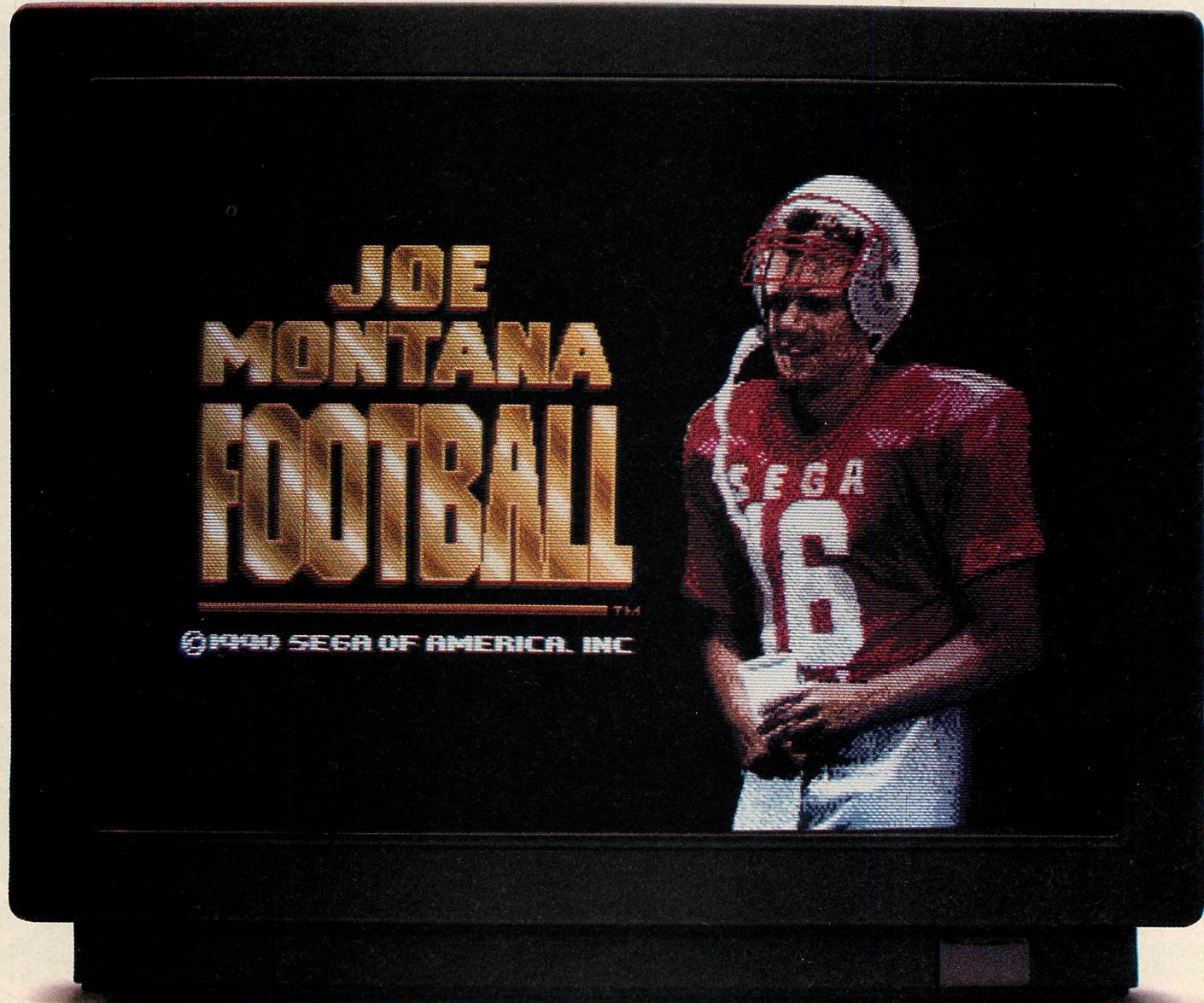


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WIN

GENESIS JOE MONTANA

INTRODUCING THE ULTIMATE
HOME VIDEO FOOTBALL GAME.



TM S DOES A FOOTBALL.™



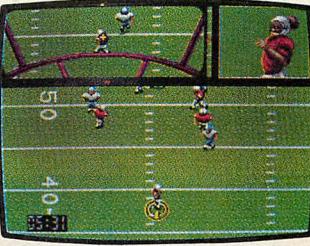
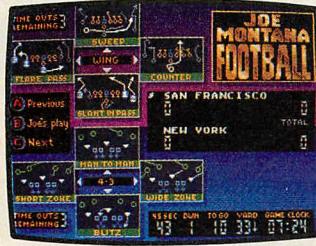
SAN FRANCISCO TEAM SCOUTING REPORT

YOU'LL HAVE TO SHUT ME DOWN
IN THE 4TH QUARTER.

NEW YORK TEAM SCOUTING REPORT

BIGGEST PASS RUSH IN THE GAME.

QB HAS A CANNON ARM.



1. Get your scouting info direct from Joe. All the inside information on all the teams. Go for the win!

2. Play select screen. Try a draw play, flare pass or maybe go for a bomb. Joe Montana even gives you his favorite play!

3. Check out your receivers through the face mask view at the top of the screen and find the open man. If the defenders are playing back, hit your receiver on a short slant for a big play.

4. Make the catch! Stiff arm defenders as you sprint downfield for the touchdown.

Who better to design the ultimate football video game than the Pro Quarterback of the Decade, Joe Montana. And Joe chose Sega™ Genesis™ because only its 16-bit power could create the lifelike animation of real passing, running, receiving and blocking. After months of working closely with our programmers in the development stages, Joe Montana Football™ is here.

You select from 16 teams, each with their own strengths, weaknesses and unique style of play. You can be Joe Montana and control San Francisco's devastatingly accurate passing attack or quarterback another team that fits your style. Set your own strategy or use Joe's recommendation for the winning play.

Call audibles at the line of scrimmage. As you take the snap, you see your receivers run their patterns from a quarterback's perspective looking through his face mask. You decide whether the pass is a bullet or a long bomb going for the endzone. You can even throw the ball away. And you also control the receiver as he dives for the ball, or runs downfield and straightarms defenders. As the game clock runs down, dive for first down yardage. There's also halftime and end-of-game stats, delivered by Joe. Or, play the "two minute drill" and see if you can score a touchdown in just two minutes—in true Joe Montana style. Football couldn't get more real. What else would you expect from Joe Montana Football™? You can't do this on Nintendo®.



GENESIS DOES IT ALL.

ARCADE GAMES:



Golden Axe™



Space Harrier II™



Super Hang-On™



Super Thunder Blade™



Cyberball™



Strider™

NEW

Altered Beast™



Ghouls 'n Ghosts™



The Revenge of Shinobi™



Rambo III®



Truxton™



Forgotten Worlds™

NEW

E.S.W.A.T.



City Under Siege™

NEW

Afterburner II™

NEW



Michael Jackson's Moonwalker™

NEW

Phantasy Star II™

NEW



The Sword of Vermillion™

MUSIC VIDEO:

ADVENTURE GAMES:



Super Monaco GP™



E.S.W.A.T.

City Under Siege™



Afterburner II™



Michael Jackson's Moonwalker™



Phantasy Star II™



The Sword of Vermillion™

SPORTS GAMES:



Tommy Lasorda
Baseball™



World Championship
Soccer™



Arnold Palmer
Tournament Golf™



Pat Riley's
Basketball™

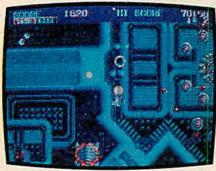


James "Buster" Douglas
Knockout Boxing™



Joe Montana Football™

ACTION GAMES:



Thunder Force II™



Ghostbusters II™



Alex Kidd:
Enchanted Castle™



Last Battle™



Mystic Defender™



Dynamite Duke™

STRATEGY/PUZZLE GAMES:

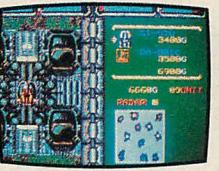
COMING SOON:



Zoom!™



Columns™



Herzog Zwei™



Dick Tracy®



Spider-Man™



The Castle of Illusion
Starring Mickey Mouse

SEGA
GENESIS

Altered Beast™, the Sega arcade hit, comes with the Genesis system. Other games sold separately. Sega and Genesis are registered trademarks of Sega of America, Inc. Ghouls 'n Ghosts, Strider and Forgotten Worlds are licensed trademarks of Capcom, Inc. Rambo III is a registered trademark of Carolco International N.V. Thunder Force II is a trademark of Techno Soft. Zoom! is a trademark of Discovery Software International, Inc. Truxton is a copyright rights reserved. Dick Tracy and Mickey Mouse are copyrights of The Walt Disney Company. Michael Jackson's Moonwalker is a trademark of Ultimate Productions. Dynamite Duke is a trademark of Seibu & Kaihatsu, Inc. All other game titles are trademarks of Sega of America. *Anticipated game availability Winter/1991, **Summer/1991.

Little Nemo: The Dream Master
Capcom

Ninja Gaiden II: The Dark Sword of Chaos
Tecmo

Skate or Die 2
Electronic Arts

Solar Jetman
Tradewest

Snake Rattle N Roll
Nintendo of America

Super C
Konami

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: The Arcade Game
Ultra

Tombs & Treasure
Activision

Ultima: Quest of the Avatar
FCI

NINTENDO GAME BOY

Game Boy Game of the Year
DuckTales
Capcom



DuckTales

Best Arcade Action Game

Double Dragon
Tradewest

Best Fantasy Role-Playing Game
Final Fantasy Legend
Square Soft

Best Graphics Adventure
Gargoyle's Quest
Capcom

Best Puzzle Game

Quarth
Ultra

Best Sports Game
NFL Football
Konami

Best Strategy Game
Mercenary Force
Meldac

Game Player's Game Boy Excellence Awards

Kwirk: The Chilled Tomato
Acclaim

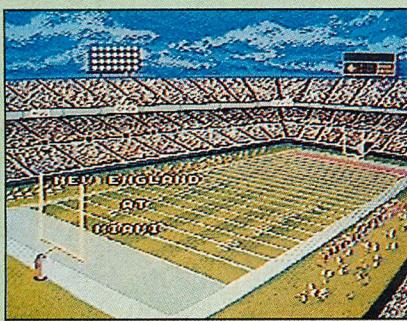
Batman
Sunsoft

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
Ultra

NBA All-Star Challenge
LJN

SEGA GENESIS

Genesis Game of the Year
John Madden Football
Electronic Arts



John Madden Football

Best Arcade Action Game

Strider
Sega of America

Best Fantasy Role-Playing Game
Sword of Vermilion
Sega of America

Best Puzzle Game
Columns
Sega of America

Best Simulation Game
Hard Drivin'
Tengen

Best Sports Game
Lakers Versus Celtics
Electronic Arts

Best Strategy Game

Populous
Electronic Arts

Best War Game
Herzog Zwei
Sega of America

Game Player's Sega Genesis Excellence Awards

Michael Jackson's Moonwalker
Sega of America

Budokan: The Martial Spirit
Electronic Arts

Hellfire
Seismic

NEC TURBOGRAFX-16

TurboGrafx Game of the Year

Bonk's Adventure

NEC Technologies



Bonk's Adventure

Best Arcade Action Game

Bloody Wolf

NEC Technologies

Best Fantasy Role-Playing Game

Ys: Book I and II

NEC Technologies

Best Puzzle Game

Klax

Tengen

Game Player's Special Achievement Award

TurboExpress

NEC Technologies



TurboExpress

NEC's TurboExpress is the new king of hand-held videogame systems. Its color, sharpness, and illumination set it apart from all other portable game machines.

Best Simulation Game

Jack Nicklaus Turbo Golf

Accolade

Best Sports Game

Takin' It to the Hoop

NEC Technologies

Best War Game

Military Madness

NEC Technologies

Game Player's NEC

TurboGrafx-16

Excellence Awards

Devil's Crush

NEC Technologies

TV Sports Football

NEC Technologies

Ninja Spirit

NEC Technologies

ATARI LYNX

Lynx Game of the Year

Todd's Adventures

in *Slime World*

Atari Corp.



Todd's Adventures in Slime World

Game Player's Atari Lynx Excellence Awards

Electrocop

Atari Corp.

Chip's Challenge

Atari Corp.

AMIGA

Amiga Game of the Year

Shadow of the Beast

Psygnosis

Game Player's Amiga Excellence Awards

Drakkhen

Data East

Battle Squadron

Innerprise

It Came From the Desert

Cinemaware

Shadow of the Beast II

Psygnosis

Treasure Trap

Electronic Zoo

Wings

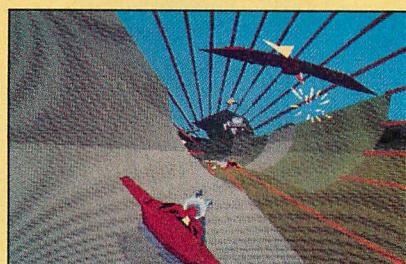
Cinemaware

COIN-OP ARCADE GAMES

Arcade Game of the Year

S.T.U.N. Runner

Atari Games



S.T.U.N. Runner

Game Player's Arcade Game Excellence Awards

F-15 Strike Eagle

MicroProse

Battletech

Virtual World Entertainments

CAPCOM[®]
USA

YO! NOID



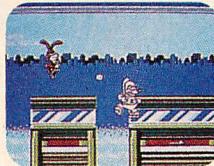
Really get a Noid.®



Use your pizza crusher to put out FireballMan.



In Central Park, skateboard over bad guys and gain magic powers.



When the IceMan comes, don't slip-up on your yo-yo bonking.

Yo! New York City's been overrun by a bunch of really bad guys. And you've got to stop them. How? Just bonk them a lot with your yo-yo. Or, out-chomp them in the pizza eating contests.

Get your slice of the Yo! Noid action for the Nintendo today. While it's hot!

CAPCOM[®]
USA

PC COMPATIBLES

PC Game of the Year

Railroad Tycoon
MicroProse



Railroad Tycoon

Best Arcade Action Game

Wing Commander
Origin

Best Fantasy Role-Playing Game

The Savage Empire
Origin

Best Graphics Adventure Game

Circuit's Edge
Infocom

Best Puzzle Game

The Fool's Errand
Miles Computing

Best Simulation Game

LHX Attack Chopper
Electronic Arts

Best Sports Game

PGA Tour Golf
Electronic Arts

Best Strategy Game

Ishido: The Way of Stones
Accolade

Best War Game

Harpoon
Three-Sixty

Game Player's PC Excellence Awards

ABC Monday Night Football
Data East

Bad Blood
Origin

Loom
Lucasfilm

Balance of the Planet
Chris Crawford Games

Moonbase: Lunar Colony Simulator
Wesson International

Blue Max: Aces of the Great War
Three-Sixty

Populous
Electronic Arts

Budokan: The Martial Spirit
Electronic Arts

Prince of Persia
Broderbund

Centurion: Defender of Rome
Electronic Arts

Scrabble, Deluxe Version
Parker Brothers

Command HQ
MicroPlay

Second Front
Strategic Simulations

Conquests of Camelot
Sierra

Secret of Monkey Island
Lucasfilm

Countdown
Access

Silent Service II
MicroProse

Dark Heart of Uukrull
Broderbund

Starflight 2
Electronic Arts/Interstel

DragonStrike
Strategic Simulations

Sword of the Samurai
MicroProse

F-15 Strike Eagle II
MicroProse

Test Drive III: The Passion
Accolade

The Game of Harmony
Accolade

Their Finest Hour: The Battle of Britain
Lucasfilm

Hero's Quest
Sierra

TV Sports Football
Cinemaware

Jack Nicklaus Unlimited Golf & Course Design
Accolade

Ultima VI: The False Prophet
Origin

Knights of Legend
Origin

Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego? (Deluxe Edition)
Broderbund

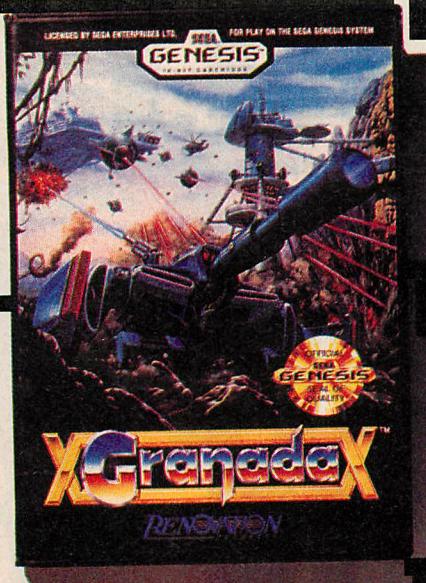
Leisure Suit Larry III
Sierra

Wonderland
Virgin Mastertronic

Les Manley in: Search for the King
Accolade

Links
Access

GP



12

1

10

RENOVATION'S LETHAL LINE UP

FINAL ZONE

You are about to be transported 100 years in the future, where the latest wave in warfare is the New Age Power-Suit, or NAP - a robotic combat machine which gives the wearer unheard-of fighting ability. Your NAP can be equipped with up to 15 weapon, speed, and maneuverability options, out of 100 available - including flame throwers, land mines, and both hand-held and body-mounted firing equipment. With this kind of firepower to command, your only limitation will be your own strategic sense and combat savvy. The ultimate battlefield - the FINAL ZONE - awaits you!

X-Granada

The Strategic Defense Initiative of the 1990's banned ICBMs and nuclear warheads. Now, in 2016, weapons are limited to super strategic mobile weapons. Enter Granada. Hypertek-Cannon Tank (HTC). Granada uses shields and radar to create its defense mechanism. Offensive firepower is provided by the most awesome array of weaponry ever assembled on a battlefield. These include multi-

directional interceptors, long-range homing missiles, and a device designed to totally obliterate all opposing forces. You will command Granada through the streets of Tobora, to battle the giant flying battleship Astarsha, and Valsic, another HTC.

WHIP RUSH

In the 22nd century, Earth Defense Headquarters detected a huge unidentified object approaching our system. A probe revealed three of our own Alpha-type robot spaceships at its core. In the hands of a hostile alien intelligence, the ships had been transformed into a gigantic, heavily-armed, flying fortress - bent on destroying Earth! The defenses of Earth have all failed to halt the juggernaut. In a final desperate bid for survival, all resources have been expended to create one mighty jet fighter: Whip Rush. You must pilot Whip Rush on a noble mission to deliver mankind from certain doom!

RENOVATION
PRODUCTS™

THE ONLY GAME IN THIS LEAGUE.

So what'll it be? Shooting hoops with a bunch of nobodies. Or playing with the baddest of the NBA's big boys.

Get real. It's Lakers vs. Celtics & the NBA® Playoffs™ every time.

The only Sega® Genesis® game with real NBA teams—1990's eight playoff contenders plus the East and West All Stars.

The only one with real players. Jordan, Chambers, Robinson, Isiah, The Mailman, Ewing, and

114 other household names.
For unbeatable five on five action.

The only one with real signature moves, too. The slams, jams, and three pointers that made the stars famous.

Even real stats from the 1990 season. And a half-time sports show.

In other words, action as big and intense as basketball itself. Big sound. Intense graphics. Killer animation. For one or two players.

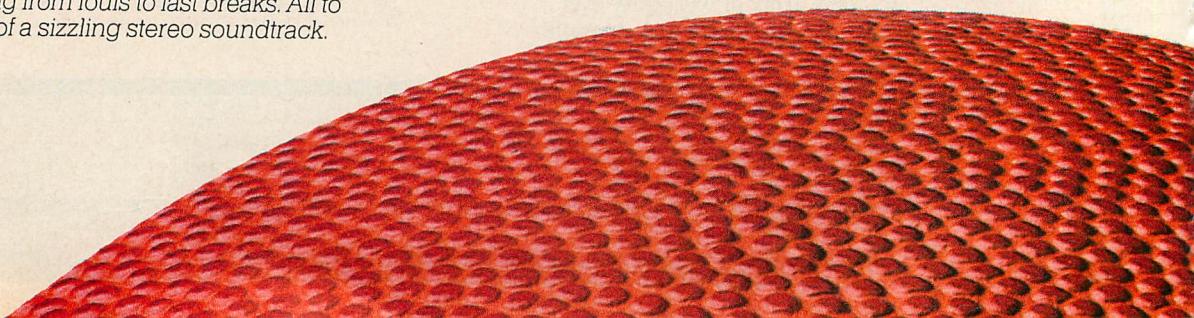
You think you can find this level of play anywhere else? Come on, get real.

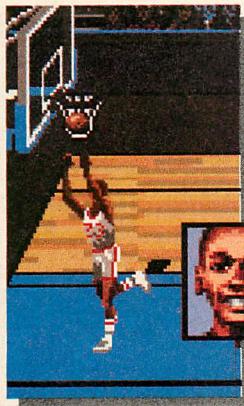


Rule the court. Full-court action with everything from fouls to fast breaks. All to the tune of a sizzling stereo soundtrack.

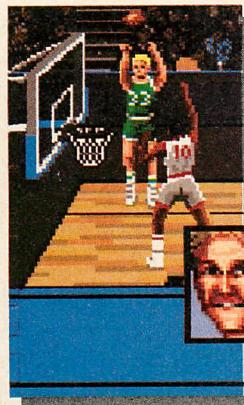


**SEGA®
GENESIS®**





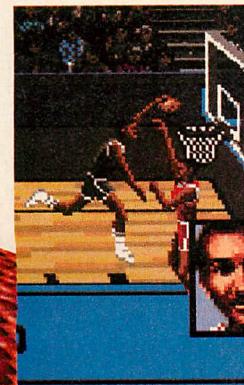
Jordan's Air Show.
Find out what life's
like above the rim.



Bird in Flight.
Nothing but net.



*Barkley's Gorilla
Dunk.* Charles is a
real animal.



Clyde's Glide.
Wham, bam a
tomahawk jam.



The Class of '90. You get the complete
rosters of '90's top playoff teams, subs
included. Plus the East and West All Stars.

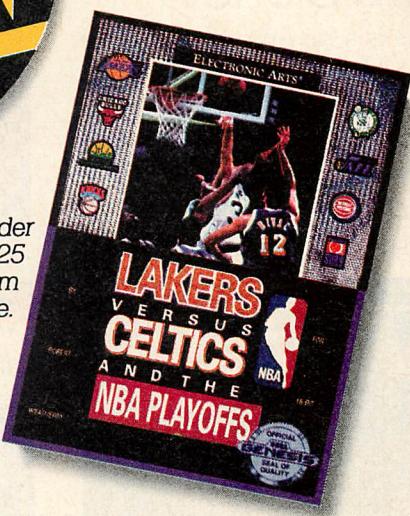
Your Best Shot. Get the best
action. The most realistic
animation. And gameplay
that lasts long after the rest have
burned out. Get real with
Electronic Arts.

Get
REAL

Visit your retailer or order
by phone. 800-245-4525
between 8 am-5 pm
Pacific Time.



ELECTRONIC ARTS®



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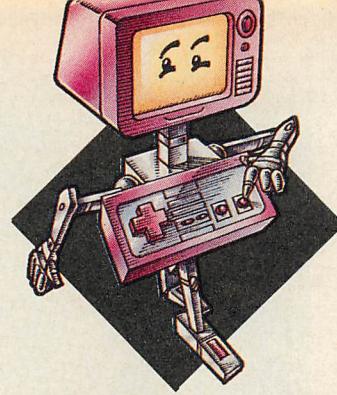
Could it be Mario has settled down? After numerous adventures in the *Mario Bros.* series, he's turned in his running shoes for a stethoscope. Now he's a medical researcher at Mushroom Kingdom Hospital, experimenting in the virus lab.

But of course, Mario is a trouble magnet. Everywhere he goes, something is bound to happen that only quick reflexes and superhuman hand-eye coordination can fix. So one day, just as Mario was beginning work, Nurse Toadstool came rushing in with news that something had gone horribly wrong. One of the experimental viruses was growing out of control inside a laboratory bottle.

Fortunately, Mario had just developed a new set of vitamins that should have been able to kill the viruses. Unfortunately, things got complicated. The vitamins worked, but each one was effective only against a specific virus, and only when enough of the vitamins were used. In desperation, Mario began throwing vitamins into the laboratory bottle, trying to get enough of the right ones to the viruses they could kill.

A Tetris Clone?

Dr. Mario is a fast-moving puzzle game that looks and plays a lot like *Tetris*. (It also bears some similarities to *Columns*, a new game for the Sega Genesis.) As Mario tosses the different-colored vitamin capsules into the laboratory

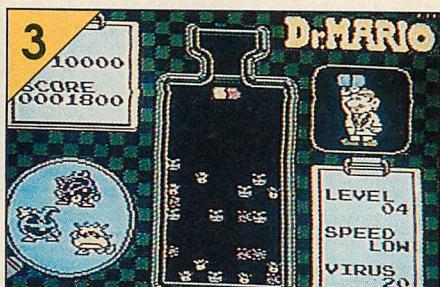


NINTENDO NEWS

Dr. Mario

Jeff Lundrigan

bottle, they gradually fall from the top of the screen. Using the controller, you can steer the capsules left or right and rotate them to various positions. As in *Tetris*, your goal is to stack them up in



just the right way.

The major difference is that instead of trying to eliminate horizontal layers, as you do in *Tetris*, your object in *Dr. Mario* is to eliminate the viruses that live in the jar. The viruses come in three strains: red, yellow, and blue. The capsules, you'll notice, also come in red, yellow, and blue. Most capsules are two of these colors, but some capsules are all the same color.

The idea is to line up four or more pieces of the same color, either horizontally or vertically. By "pieces," we mean a whole capsule, or half of a capsule, or a virus. When that happens, all of the matching pieces disappear from the screen. If one or more of the pieces were viruses, you get points.

Play continues until either all the viruses are eliminated from the jar, or the jar gets so full of capsules that there's no room for another one. If you succeed in getting rid of all the viruses, you advance to the next level, which is even more contaminated with viruses.

Although *Dr. Mario* (like *Tetris*) is basically a simple game, it's very difficult to master. The first few levels have only a few viruses, but pretty soon the jar gets so full of viruses that there's barely enough room for any vitamins.

Dr. Mario lets you choose from several options. You can select which level to start on (1 through 20); the speed at which Mario will

1 Mario is back, and this time he's an M.D. But would you let him give you a checkup?

2 The options screen lets you choose what level to start on, from 1 to 20. You can also select the speed of play and the background music.

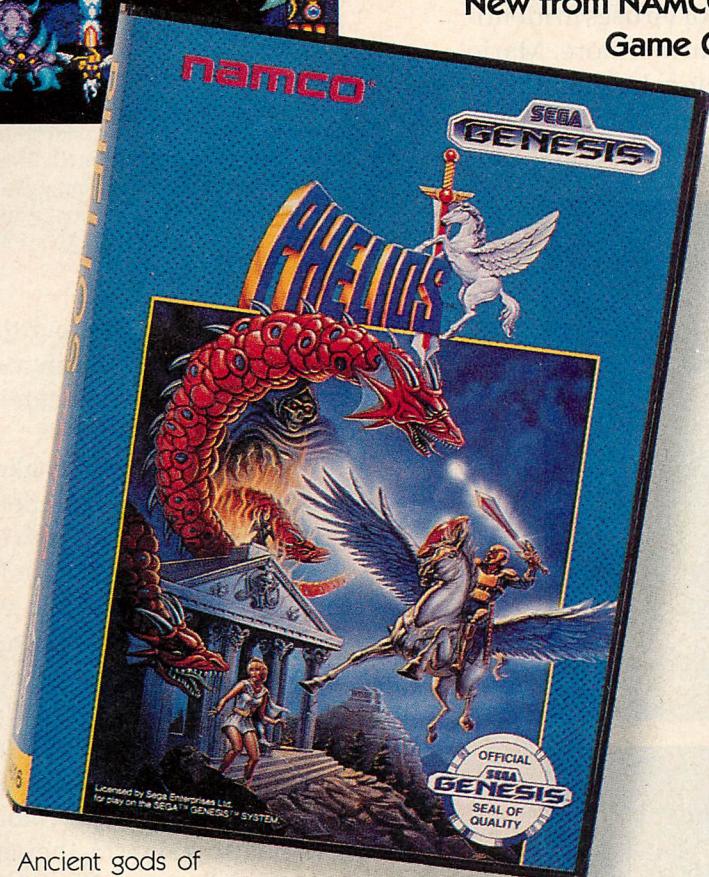
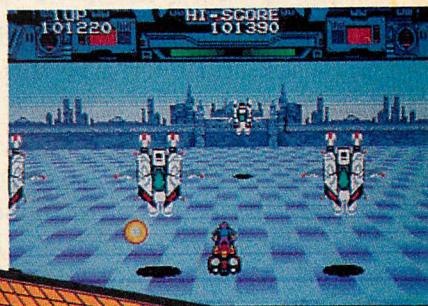
3 At the upper right, you can see the next capsule Dr. Mario will toss into the jar. At the lower left, you can see the viruses under a magnifying glass. When you eliminate a virus, the same color virus gets knocked over under the glass.



Master The Skies

Imagine yourself astride a winged horse, thrusting and slashing with a magical sword... Or skimming the earth on a futuristic airbike, blasting through waves of attack robots... Just imagine... Now get ready for the kind of innovative games we're known for.

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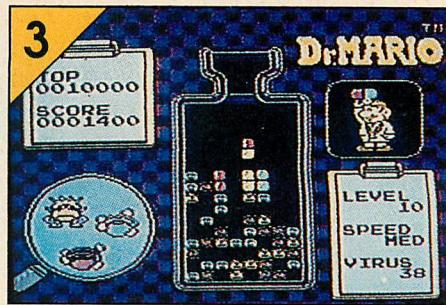
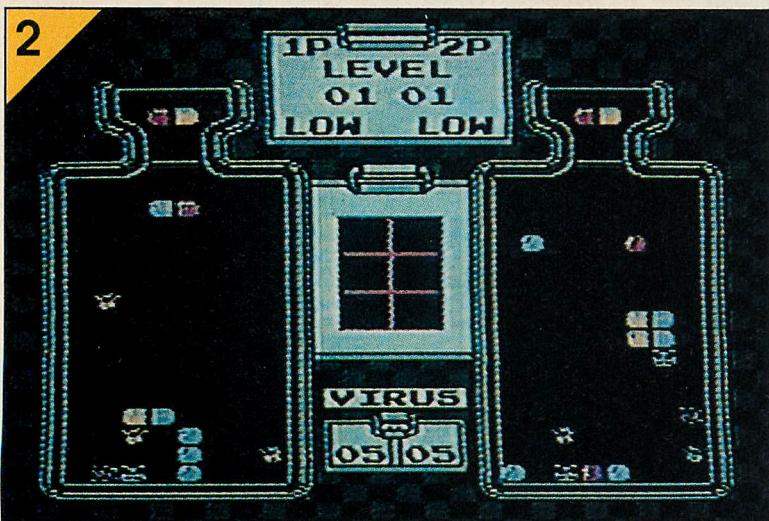
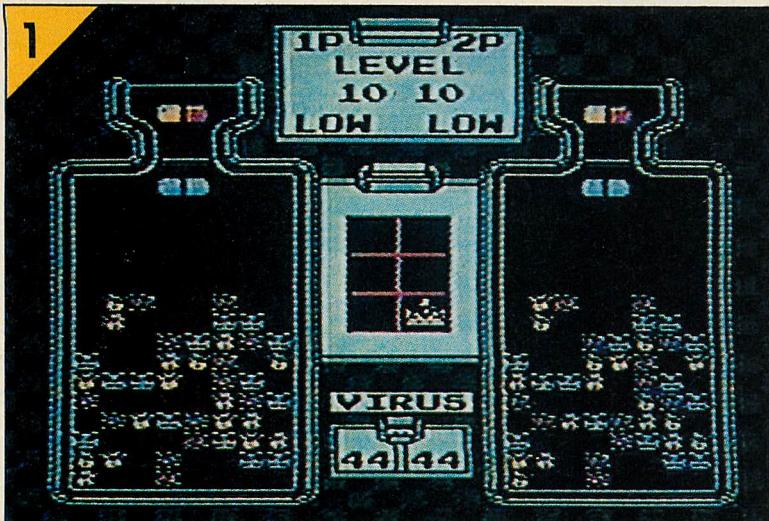
toss in the vitamins (low, medium, or high); and even two different kinds of music ("Fever," "Chill," or no music at all).

You can also select a two-player mode that lets you square off against another person. The main difference in a two-player game is that two jars fit side-by-side on the screen. Vitamin capsules are thrown into both jars simulta-

neously, and the goal is to eliminate your viruses before your opponent does. If you succeed in clearing out all of your viruses (or if your opponent allows his vitamins to pile up to the top of the bottle), you win the round. The first player to win three rounds wins the game.

Perhaps the best feature of the two-player mode is that each player can select his or her own level and speed. This provides two players of unequal skill with a good means of "handicapping."

If both players start at the *same* level, they'll begin each round with equal numbers of viruses in identical positions. Furthermore, Mario will toss the same color vitamins in the same order into each player's jar. This gives both players a to-



In a two-player game, you can't see Dr. Mario, but you can still see 1 what capsule is coming next. Notice that both jars are identical, and the same capsules are falling in the same order into each one.

2 When you eliminate more than one line at a time (left), odd pieces of capsules fall into your opponent's jar (right).

3 Here's an example of planning ahead. When the red-and-yellow capsule lands, it will eliminate the yellow pieces below it, including a yellow virus. The remaining red half of the capsule will then drop down, landing on top of the red virus directly below it.

tally equal chance of clearing the screen and completely eliminates luck as a factor. Two-player games are contests of pure skill.

Another feature that makes two-player games more competitive is that when you clear two or more lines simultaneously (whether or not they include viruses), some random, unconnected pieces of vitamin capsules will fall onto your opponent's screen. The number of pieces that fall is equal to the number of lines you cleared (up to four). Although their colors and positions are random, they always seem to fall in the places that are most annoying to your opponent. Therefore, it's possible to make life more difficult for your opponent, even though you can't affect his screen directly.

Strategy Tips

Dr. Mario is one of those games with simple rules that can be

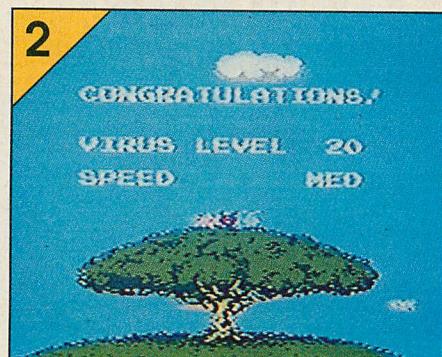
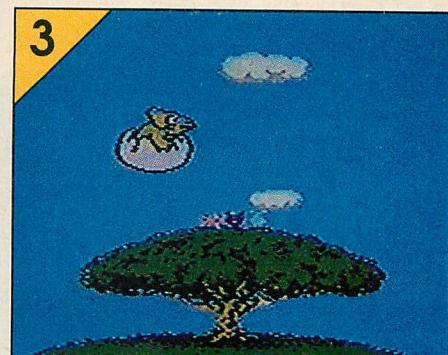
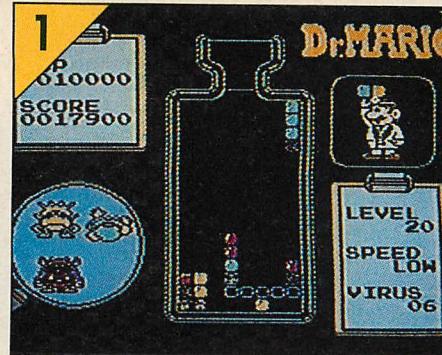
NINTENDO NEWS

learned in a few minutes — but, like *Tetris* or *Othello*, it actually involves numerous, complex strategies.

One key to shaping your strategy is to keep an eye on the upper right corner of the screen, where you can see the next vitamin Dr. Mario will toss into the jar. Although you can make the currently falling capsule fall faster by pushing down on the directional pad, you should probably just let it drop at its own pace. Use the time to look at what the next capsule will be, and figure out where it will fit.

It's also important to anticipate where broken pieces of capsules will drop. Each capsule consists of two halves, and if one half disappears when you match a row, the other half remains on the screen. When this happens, the half left behind drops until something stops it. If it happens to land somewhere to make *another* matching row of four colors, that row will also disappear, and any halves left behind will also drop, and so on.

It should be pretty obvious, therefore, that when you match a capsule to a row, you should also think about where the odd half will drop. How will the leftover piece affect the piles of capsules below it? The key to beating *Dr. Mario* — especially at the higher, more contaminated levels — is getting the knack of lining up capsules so that when one half disappears, the leftover half can drop somewhere useful.



If you drop a capsule on top of a different-colored virus, there are only three ways to clear the virus later. The first method is to simply pile on more capsules of the same wrong color until they form a matching row and disappear, leaving the virus uncovered. This method is the most common, and it works, but it also takes time. In addition, the halves left behind might cover other viruses in the process, so careful planning is essential.

The second way to clear a virus that's buried beneath wrong-colored capsules is to match it with a horizontal row of pieces. This is probably better than method #1, but isn't always possible. Again, careful planning is the only way to keep those lines clear.

The third method is even more difficult — form a vertical stack by building up matching capsules *beneath* the virus. This is possible because viruses, unlike capsules, do not fall toward the bottom of the screen when there's nothing to support them. They hang in mid-air, and sometimes you can slide capsules into place underneath.

1 Don't forget that you can line up pieces horizontally, too. Often it's the only way out of a tough situation.

2 After every fifth level you beat, you'll see a congratulations screen.

If you let the congratulations scene play, something will fly across the screen, and it's different each time. This character appears after you beat level 20 on medium or high speed.

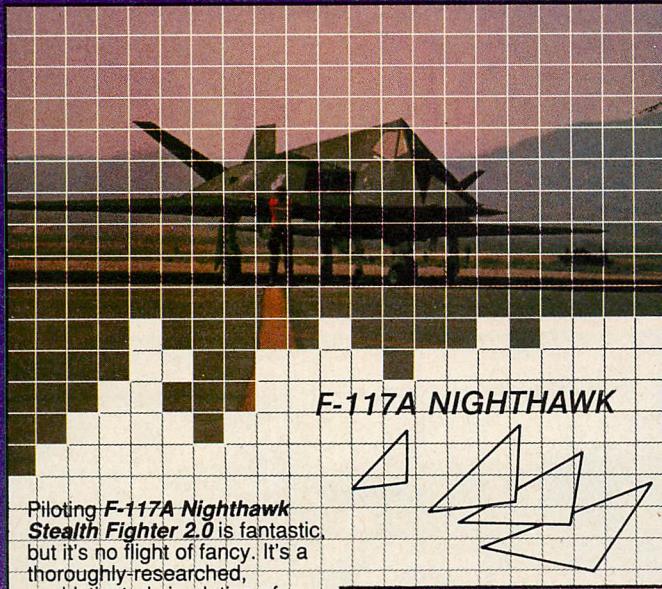
3 Dr. Mario actually has more levels than you can select on the option screen. This is level 21. Pretty full, huh?

Like other *Tetris*-style games, *Dr. Mario* is an exercise in thinking ahead under pressure. You can usually recover from mistakes, but it always takes time. And the longer you take to clear a level, the faster Dr. Mario tosses in the capsules.

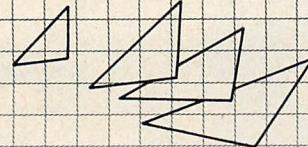
Unlike other *Tetris* variants, however, *Dr. Mario* has viruses, and you can see them magnified in the lower left corner of the screen. When the jar fills up and you've lost, they'll laugh at you, too. Ever hear a virus laugh?

GP

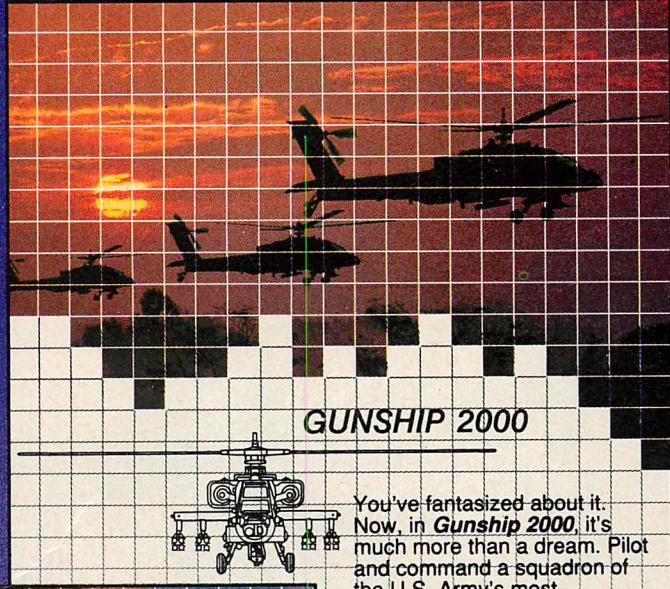
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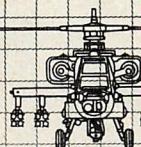
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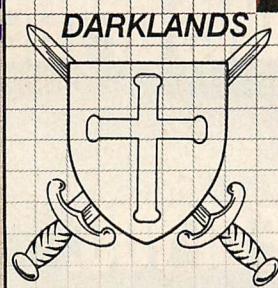
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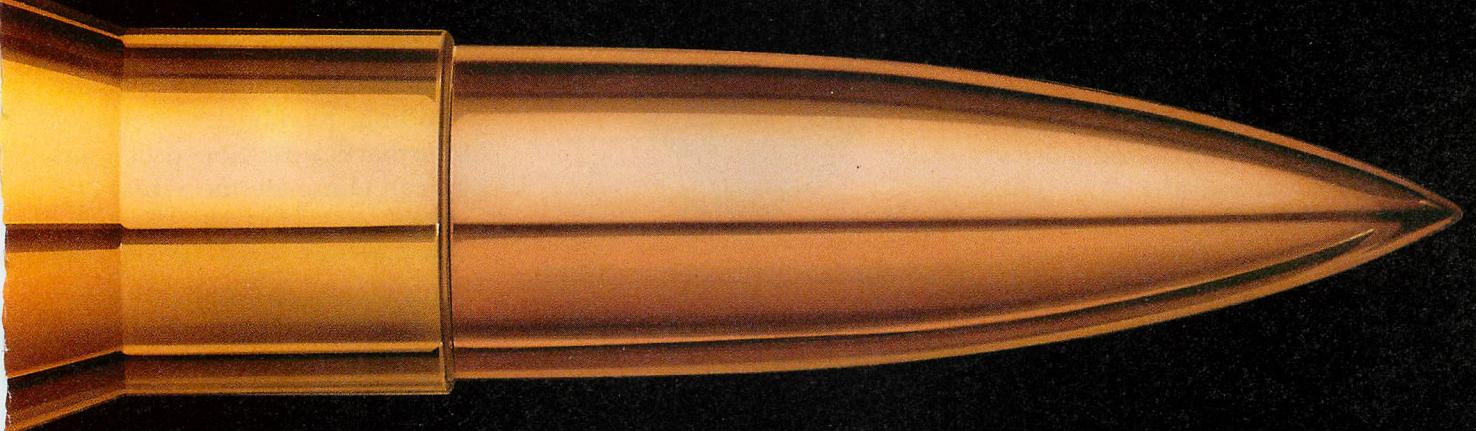
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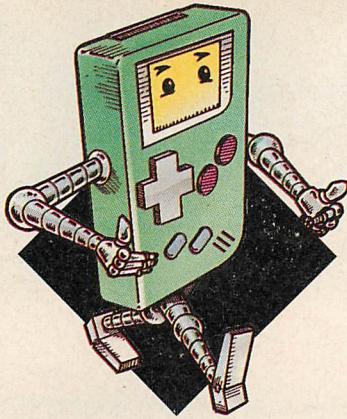


This has not been a good day for your Commander-in-Chief.

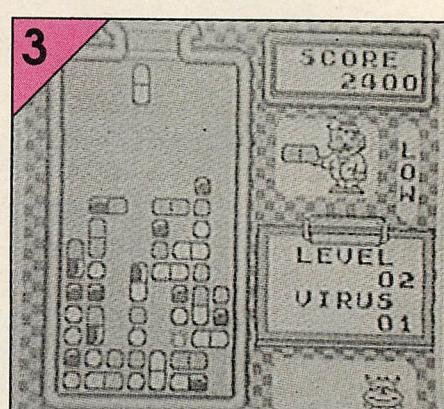
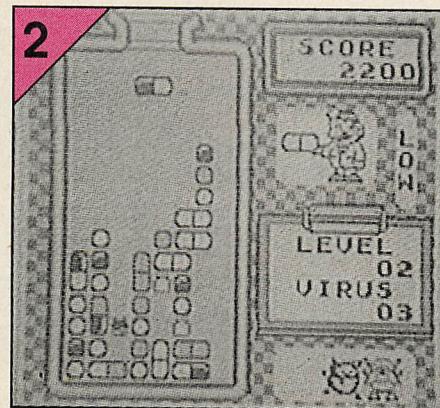
An epidemic has been spreading through the world of electronic gaming over the past couple of years. Like most epidemics it started quietly, but soon raged out of control. It originated in a foreign country, then marched through Europe, North America, and most of the rest of the world.

It first hit the United States in 1988 in the form of a simple but endlessly challenging puzzle game for PC-compatible computers. From there it spread like wildfire to arcades and home videogame systems, conquering millions of game players along the way.

What's the name of this "epi-



GAME BOY PLAYERS



demic"? *Tetris*, of course. But while many players have broken the initial grip of *Tetris* fever, it has spread to videogame designers eager to capitalize on the success of *Tetris*. Several companies have released games that try to imitate the magical combination of simple design and engrossing game play that gives *Tetris* such broad appeal.

Now it's Nintendo's turn. And to sweeten the pot a bit, Nintendo's entry in "the next *Tetris*" race also stars everyone's favorite plumber — or should we say doctor?

Dr. Mario may conjure up images of adventures in the Mushroom Kingdom, but you won't find any pipes, coins, warp zones, or secret rooms here. What you can

expect is a simple, highly addictive, and compulsively playable little mind-bender. Nintendo has simultaneously released versions of *Dr. Mario* for the NES and Game Boy, and the Game Boy version is practically identical to its big-screen brother. (For a look at the NES version of *Dr. Mario*, check out the "Nintendo News" column elsewhere in this issue.)

Mario has traded in his plumber's garb for a stethoscope and lab coat, but even in the sterile environment of a hospital he can't seem to stay out of trouble. One of his virus experiments has gone haywire, and the little critters are spreading quickly. It's lucky for Mario that he's developed vitamins that can eliminate the viruses on contact.

When the game begins, the screen shows a jar containing several runaway viruses. There are three kinds of viruses — black, white, and gray. You have six kinds of vitamin capsules to use against the viruses, each made up of two colors. A capsule can be all black,

all white, all gray, or a combination of two of those three colors.

1 From this screen you can select the number of viruses to eliminate, the speed at which the vitamin capsules will fall, and the background music.

2 Magnified views of the three kinds of viruses are displayed in the bottom right corner. When you eliminate all of one kind of virus from the jar, the magnified virus also disappears.

3 Only one virus, and all those vitamins? This player made the mistake of trying to match too many vertical rows.



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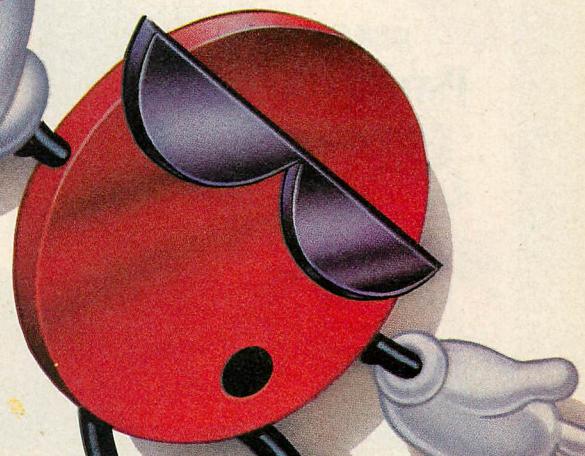
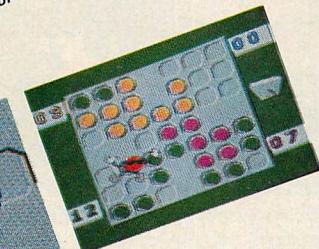
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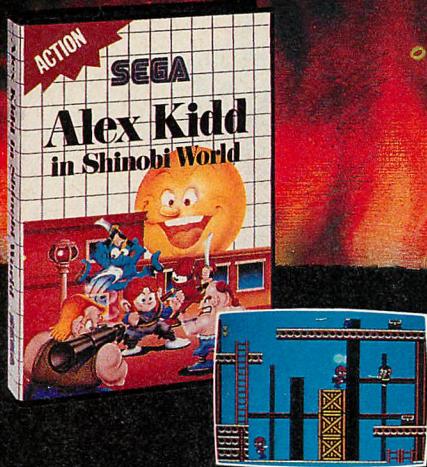
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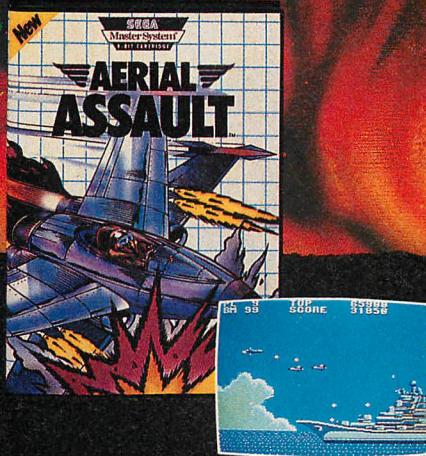
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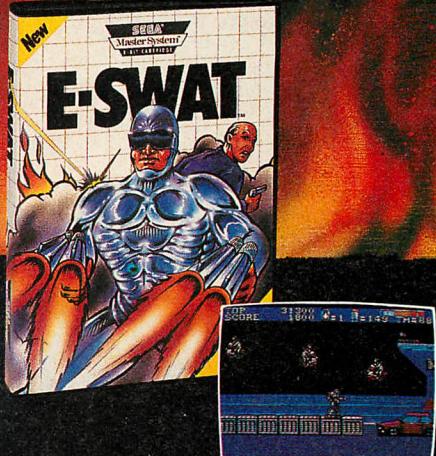
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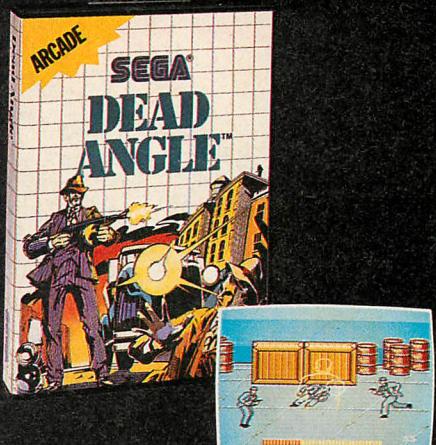
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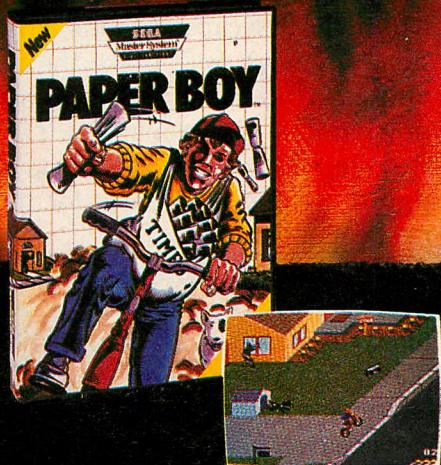


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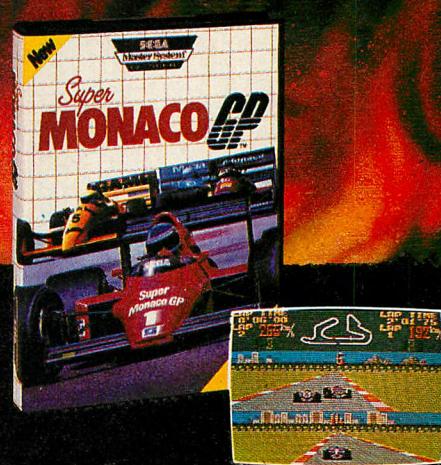
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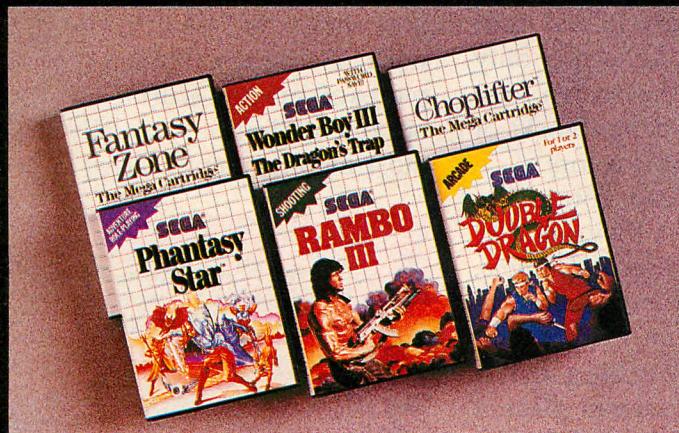
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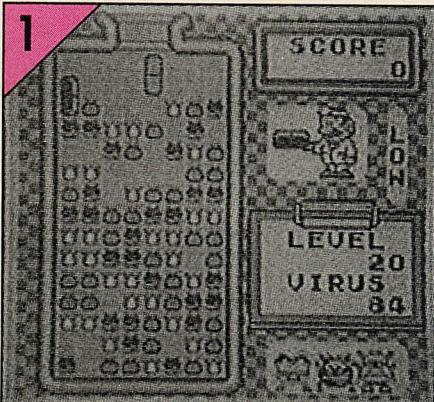
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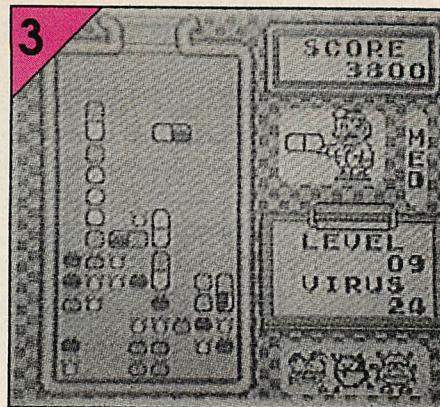
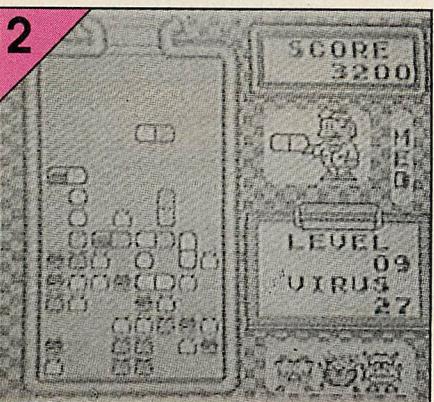
continued from page 36



directional pad. You can also rotate the capsule in either direction with the A and B buttons, and make it drop faster by pressing down on the directional pad.

Your goal in *Dr. Mario* is to eliminate all the viruses from the jar. Whenever you form a row of four matching colors, that row disappears, including any viruses in the row. If only half of a capsule was used in the row, the other half drops until it lands on a virus, another capsule, or the bottom of the jar. You earn points only if your matching row contains a virus.

You can start the game on 20



different levels. Level 1 has only four viruses in the jar, and even a beginning player can quickly eliminate them. But once you've cleared the biological baddies from one jar, you advance to the next one. Each jar (level) contains four more viruses than the previous jar. This continues (if you're successful) until the 20th level, where you're faced with 84 viruses crammed in until they almost reach the top of the bottle. Just the sight of that many viruses on a Game Boy screen is unnerving.

The idea of a puzzle game in which you form rows of matching colors isn't new, of course. Similar games include Sega of America's *Columns* for the Genesis and Tengen's *Klax* for the NES, Genesis, NECTurboGrafx-16, and Atari Lynx. *Klax*, however, sends only one color down the screen at a time, and *Columns* drops blocks of three interchangeable colors.

Because you can rotate the colored capsules as they fall, *Dr. Mario* is basically a mix of *Columns*, *Klax*, and — you guessed it — *Tetris*. It's the rotation feature that adds more strategy to the game. If you plan ahead, you can place a vitamin capsule so that half is part of a match, causing the other half to fall and help complete another match. Mastering this domino effect is one of the keys to success in *Dr. Mario*.

Although it's easier to create vertical rows of matching colors,

the fastest way to eliminate viruses that have been "buried" beneath capsules is to match them with a horizontal row. Time is definitely a factor, though, because the game speeds up after every tenth capsule is thrown into the jar.

To plan your next move, keep an eye on Dr. Mario. Right after he tosses a vitamin capsule into the bottle, the next capsule he will toss appears in his hand. He won't toss it until the first capsule lands, so (at first, anyway) don't make the vitamins drop faster by pressing down on the directional pad. That way you'll have plenty of time to figure out the best place for the next capsule to land.

The only exception to this strategy is when you're competing head-to-head against another player. In a two-player game, speed is very important.

The two-player mode requires two Game Boys (each with a *Dr. Mario* cartridge) hooked together with the Video Link cable. Each player's screen has an identical vitamin bottle, and the capsules drop in the same order for both players. It's basically a race to see who can eliminate all the viruses first, but there's a slight twist. If you eliminate two or more rows with a single capsule, random pieces of capsules will fall into your opponent's bottle — usually in the most inconvenient places. A ran-

1 On level 20 you have to eliminate 84 viruses, and there's no room for even the smallest error.

2 When this vitamin lands, the gray row will disappear, causing the white half of the capsule to land and complete another vertical row.

3 Your first temptation may be to let the black-and-white vitamin drop as shown. But if you flip it 180 degrees and move it one row to the left, the black half will be positioned over a black virus.



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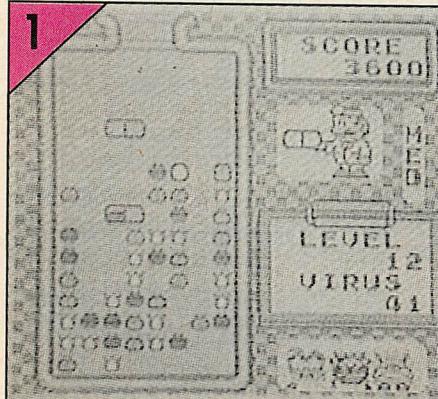


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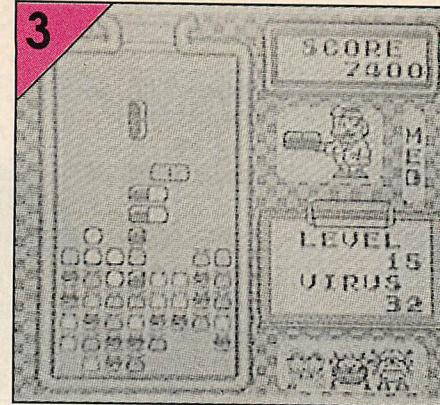
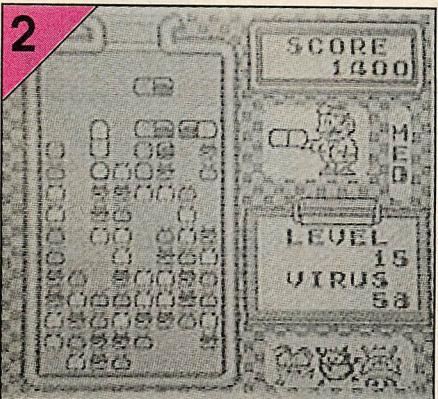
GAME BOY PLAYERS

continued from page 40



dom piece falls for every row you clear, up to four rows. In other words, if you clear two rows, two random pieces will fall into your opponent's jar; if you clear four (or more) rows, then four pieces will fall.

If your opponent's jar gets filled to the top, you win the round, even if you still have viruses remaining in your bottle. The first player to win three rounds wins the game. You can set the speed and the number of viruses differently for each player, so a less-experienced player can compete on an even basis against a more skilled player.

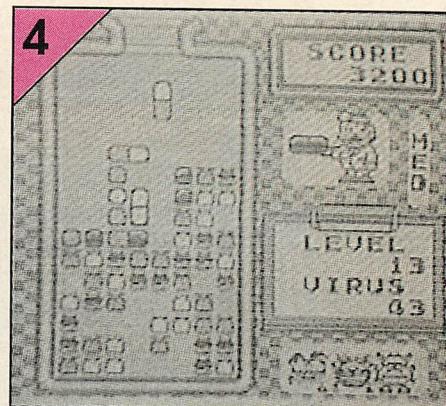


Dr. Mario has two soundtracks to choose from, appropriately named "Fever" and "Chill." (There's also an option for no music.) "Fever" is a rolling, fast-paced boogie number, while "Chill" is much slower and more workman-like. After playing the game for some time, I got the impression that the faster music worked best at the lower levels, while the frantic pace of the upper levels could be slightly neutralized by the slower music.

Puzzle games have always translated well to the Game Boy, and *Dr. Mario* is no exception. It loses none of its playability due to the smaller screen. In fact, the two-player mode might be even easier on the Game Boy than on the NES — the NES version squeezes both players' bottles onto the same screen. Combine that with the temptation to look at your opponent's bottle, and you can find yourself making mistakes you wouldn't make in a one-player game.

Nintendo has borrowed the best qualities from several puzzle games and rolled them into a nice package in *Dr. Mario*. It's simple to learn, difficult to master, and *very* tough to quit playing, even if you've been stuck on the same level for many hours. True, the game's title is a bit misleading, since Mario doesn't really play much of a role — some people might be expecting another hop-

ping-and-bopping adventure. But if you like a good challenge and don't mind a little frustration, *Dr. Mario* is the perfect prescription for your Game Boy.



1 Sometimes it pays to make horizontal rows. Here, making a vertical row would cause the black half of the capsule already in place to land atop a white virus.

2 Two different viruses side by side make an easy place to drop a vitamin containing those two colors.

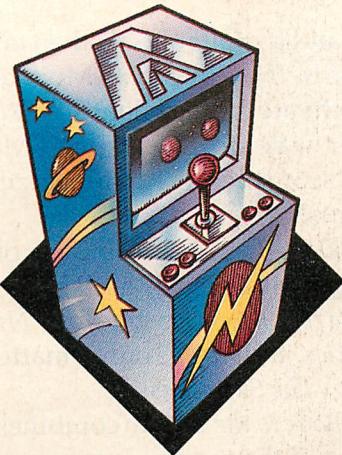
3 Here's a perfect example of a chain reaction. When you turn the black capsule vertically to complete one row, the white capsules will drop to complete another row. That will cause the gray capsule to fall and finish a third row horizontally.

4 Sometimes you have to make a split-second decision between two good spots to place a capsule. Placing this capsule on top of its twin to the left is one choice, but dropping it vertically and then flipping it to the left will eliminate a white row — and give you more breathing room.

Seven issues ago I reported on the new generation of pinball games, an industry now celebrating its 60th anniversary. I've since become a born-again pinball fanatic, so it's no surprise that I recently found myself at the 6th Annual International Pinball Expo in Chicago.

All of the major pinball companies were there: Bally/Midway, Williams Electronics Games, Data East, and others. Data East was offering field trips to its nearby pinball factory, where the curious could witness the step-by-step construction of a brand-new pinball machine. Since I had already toured the factory a few months ago, I headed straight over to the exhibition hall.

Antique pinball tables from earlier periods in the game's history lined the floor, to the delight of pinball fanatics. Numerous semi-



ARCADE ACTION

Pinball: 1991

Scott Wolf

nars — on topics from game design to restoration techniques — were open to all. But since I have the attention span of a sleeping weasel, I didn't go to any of them. Instead, I was much more interested in checking out the hottest new games.

Among the new tables from Williams are *Diner*, *Riverboat Gambler*, and *Funhouse*. In *Diner*, your goal is to serve food orders to five demanding customers so you can collect tips. This table serves up all the sights and sounds

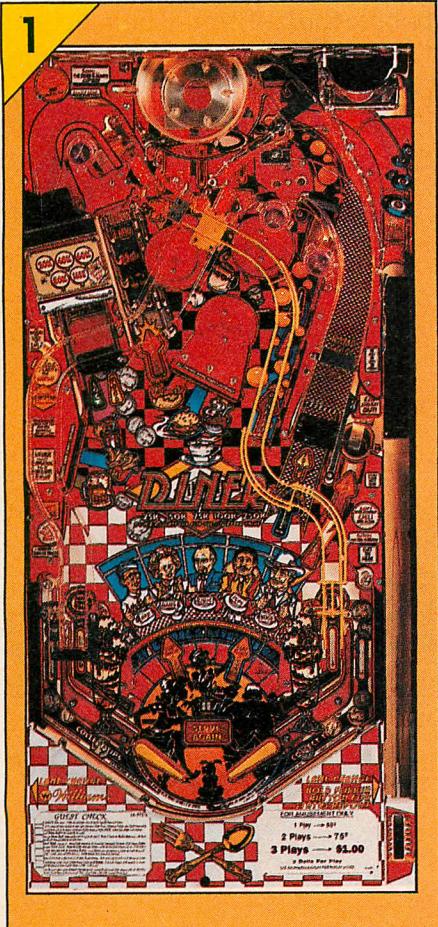
1 The challenge in *Diner* is to collect tips from demanding customers.

2 *Riverboat Gambler* lets you try your hand at roulette, blackjack, and poker.

of a real diner, including jukebox skill shots, E-A-T lanes, grill bonuses, and, of course, the Special of the Day.

Riverboat Gambler puts you on a floating casino complete with roulette, blackjack, five-card poker, and the Lucky Lady slot machine. A unique control panel allows you to bet on either red, black, or green at the roulette wheel.

Funhouse is a nostalgic reincarnation of Aladdin's Castle from Chicago's late, lamented Riverview amusement park. Dominating the playfield is the animated head of Rudy, the funhouse barker, who picks a different name for each player (up to four) and continues to address each player by that name for the entire game. Although he's helpful at first, Rudy soon realizes that you are advancing the clock toward closing time, and he begins to get angry. When the clock strikes



ARCADE ACTION

midnight, Rudy falls asleep and starts to snore. Shoot the ball into his mouth for a multi-ball jackpot play.

Bally/Midway's new games include *Radical* and *Dr. Dude and His Excellent Ray*. In *Radical*, the table is a skateboard park where you can shred your way through a myriad of ramps, including an open-sided, on-the-edge vertical



ramp. The Skate or Die Multi-Ball play can net you up to ten million points on a single shot. *Radical* also features an exclusive gizmo called the Diverter that automatically guides the ball to different scoring areas so you can experience every curve, swerve, and killer trick.

Dr. Dude and His Excellent Ray fills the prescription for way cool pinball. Get yourself a Rock 'n' Roll heart, a Magnetic personal-

ity, and the Gift of Gab, then take a spin in the Molecular Mixmaster to activate the Excellent Ray. Work your way up the Dude-O-Meter and score the world's first gazillion points!

Data East has a bunch of licensed titles, such as *Back to the Future*, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, and (it was only a matter of time) *The Simpsons*.

Back to the Future combines all three of the movies into one wild game featuring the voices of Michael J. Fox and Christopher Lloyd. Another highlight is the background music by Huey Lewis and ZZ Top.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles wasn't finished when I saw it, but should be by the time this magazine comes out (and just in time for the second Turtles movie).

But the game that really blew everyone away was *The Simpsons*. It's so awesomely enjoyable that you don't even have to like pinball to play it. The first thing that grabs you is the brilliantly colored artwork by Matt Groening and the digitized speech by all of the characters from the

hit TV show (recorded especially for Data East). When you walk up to the table, you'll hear Homer's boss, Mr. Burns, implore you to "Put more funds into the machine!" When you press the start button, the familiar strains of Danny Elfman's "Simpsons" theme song come wafting through the clouds. And when the ball drops through the top "doughnut" lanes, Homer gleefully exclaims, "Sprinkles!"



Three big bumpers are shaped like the suspiciously glowing cooling towers of Springfield's nuclear power plant. Listen to Principal Skinner or Ms. Krabappel scream in pain with each hit from Bart's slingshot. Help Marge get three strikes at the bowling alley to activate the ball locks and light up her tower of neon-blue hair. If you bobble the ball, you'll be ridiculed, "Don't you know how to use flippers?!" If you lose it, you'll hear the dreaded words, "Smithers, fire that man."

1 *Funhouse* was partly inspired by a carnival barker at a Chicago amusement park.

2 *The Simpsons* features Matt Groening's artwork and the digitized voices of all the major characters on the TV show.

Elfman's manic music and a staggering amount of sampled speech work together to create a giddy, fevered atmosphere. In fact, I had so much fun playing *The Simpsons* that I completely neglected to do well. Me and Bart — we're both underachievers.

GP



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Psygnosis, the British publisher that brought us last year's smash hit *Shadow of the Beast*, has apparently been pretty busy since then. They've recently released not one but *three* new arcade games for the Amiga. Two of them — *Shadow of the Beast II* and *Awesome* — were actually created by Reflections, the same design group that programmed the original *Shadow of the Beast*. And like that game, both come packaged in an oversized box with an attractive T-shirt.

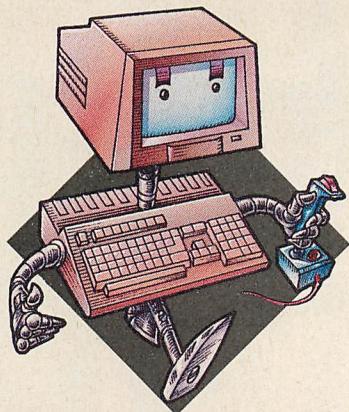
1 *Shadow of the Beast II* continues where its predecessor left off — with the same great graphics, sound, and animation.

2 Among the improvements in *Shadow of the Beast II* is smooth-scrolling animation in all directions, giving you more freedom of movement.

3 *Awesome* represents a departure in style for the designers of *Shadow of the Beast*.

The third new title is *The Killing Game Show*. Although it was written by a new author, it has the distinctive Psygnosis feel.

Shadow of the Beast II continues where the original left off, with great graphics, realistic sound effects, and nonstop action. An animated slide show introduces the story, but as with most arcade games, it has no bearing on the action. All you really need to know



AMIGA PLAYERS

Psygnosis Strikes Again

Sheldon Leemon

is that if something moves, punch it; if something shoots, duck; and if something looks like treasure, pick it up.

Not that *Shadow of the Beast II* is a simple game — far from it. Evading the many traps and hostile creatures requires both strategy and fast reflexes. To finish each

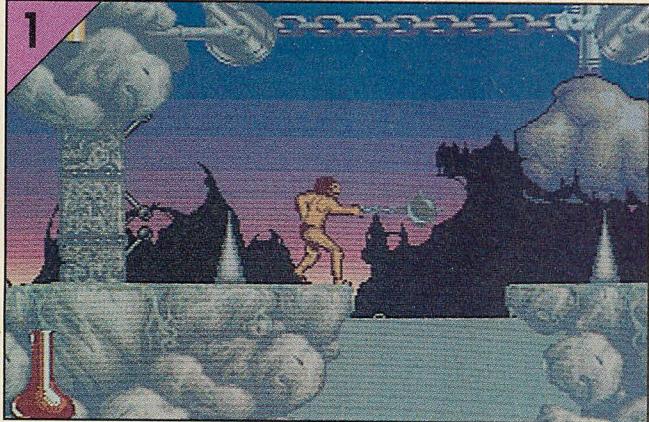


level, you have to pick up certain objects, then figure out how and when to use them. Like the original, this game is tough enough to keep you playing for a long, long time.

Among the improvements is a new menu option that allows you to turn off the music and — more importantly — to skip the annoyingly long end-of-game sequence which sometimes made the original *Shadow of the Beast* such a pain. The new game also scrolls smoothly in all directions, giving you a better illusion of freedom to move about. The graphics seem to be drawn to a somewhat smaller scale, however, eliminating some of the rich detail that made the original game so striking.

Awesome represents a new direction for the designers of the *Shadow of the Beast* series. Not only does it adopt a different style, but it also incorporates many different styles in one. Although it might be classified as a space shoot-em-up, it has a number of different sequences that can be thought of as entirely separate games.

For instance, there are se-





Few live to finish this game.



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AMIGA PLAYERS



quences in which your spaceship is centered on the screen, and moving the joystick rotates the universe around you — all while you're trying to shoot asteroids and enemy spaceships. Another sequence has simulated 3-D graphics like those in *Space Harrier*, and you fight a large space dragon. Still another sequence borrows the turn-and-thrust controls of *Asteroids*, and another one involves a chase through underground tunnels to a control center where you can trade for weapons. While none of these sequences is earth-shaking in terms of originality or execution, the variety of game play in *Awesome* is, well, rather awesome. It is much more complex than the *Beast* games.

Awesome comes on three disks, and the first disk appears to be devoted

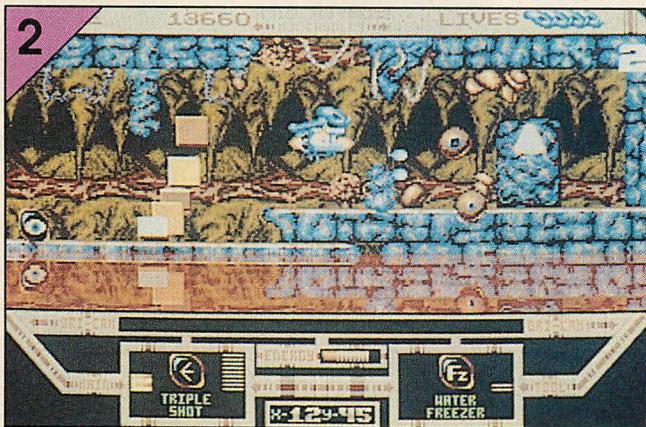
to one of the most spectacular introductions ever seen. (It even outdoes the famous *Blood Money* intro.) *Awesome* also takes advantage of extra memory to create a RAM disk which cuts down on disk-access time. However, you still can't install the game on a hard drive.

The Killing Game Show is a combination climbing and shooting game with a number of neat new twists.

Although the game's title might remind you of the Schwarzenegger movie *Running Man*, the game itself has nothing to do with muscle-bound gladiators or fountains of blood. The hero is a comical-

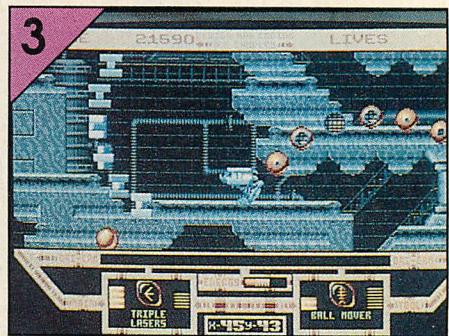
looking contraption that resembles an armored duck, and his enemies are the usual variety of mechanized baddies. You've got to blow away the bad guys as you climb from level to level, picking up weapons, tools, and keys. To be successful, you must do everything in the proper order, a feat made much more difficult by a rising tide of deadly liquid that floods the bottom of the maze.

Rather than make you replay an entire level every time you lose a duck (er, life), the game starts over in an instant-replay mode that



duplicates the last screen you completed before you got killed. You can jump in and take control at any point to avoid making the same mistake twice.

The Killing Game Show is difficult, but not frustrating. Although there's a fair amount of shooting, you're not under constant assault. You usually have a couple of seconds to think about your next move, and maybe even to admire the parallax-scrolling background that looks like intricate metalwork. Yet with 16 levels, there's no danger of finishing too quickly.



1 Some of the monsters you'll face in *Awesome* are fully deserving of the game's title.

2 In *The Killing Game Show*, you control an odd-looking contraption that resembles an armored duck.

3 Although *The Killing Game Show* is a fast-paced action game, you usually get a few seconds to think about your next move.

Although these three new games from Psygnosis are very different in style and game play, they're all polished products with high-quality graphics and sound. Expert arcade gamers (and those who need another T-shirt) will want to try their hand at *Shadow of the Beast II*. Mere mortals like myself who have plenty of T-shirts may prefer the somewhat easier pace of *The Killing Game Show*. And those who crave variety should try *Awesome*.

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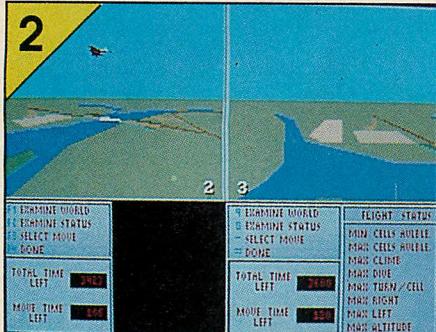
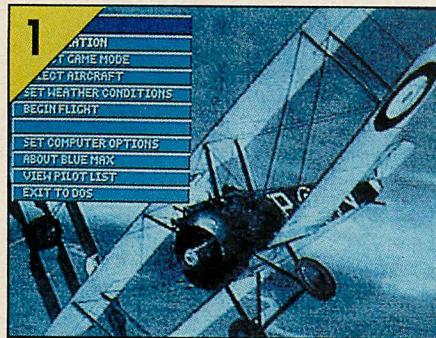
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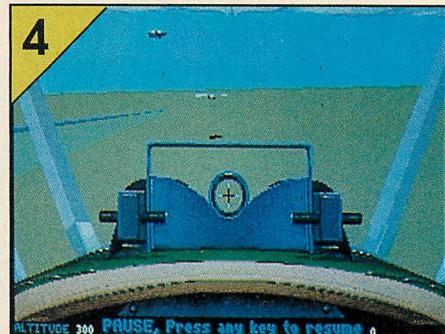
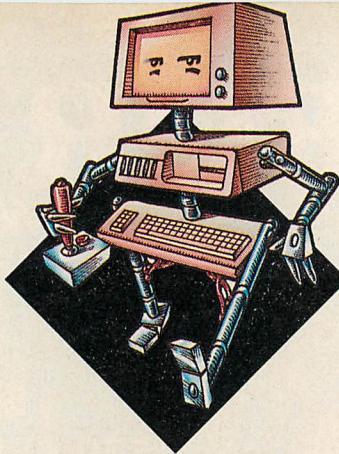
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World War II had its great pilots, great aircraft, and truly great air battles, but the romance of aerial combat started and ended in World War I. In canvas-and-wood airplanes that were thoroughly untested in battle conditions, the pilots of the first war invented and refined the art of shooting opponents out of the sky. Although airplanes actually accomplished very little of strategic value, we tend to remember those early pilots



much more than the infantrymen who were being slaughtered in the trenches — probably because the pilots' aerial exploits seem dashing and romantic amid the many horrors of the First World War.

The most famous World War I pilot (besides, of course, Snoopy) was Baron Manfred von Richthofen, the famous Red Baron. There were others as well: Eddie Rickenbacker, the leading American ace, and Billy Bishop, the great Canadian pilot. These men flew planes known as Sopwith Camels, Fokker Triplanes, and Albatrosses. And they flew their planes not in the tight formations of World War



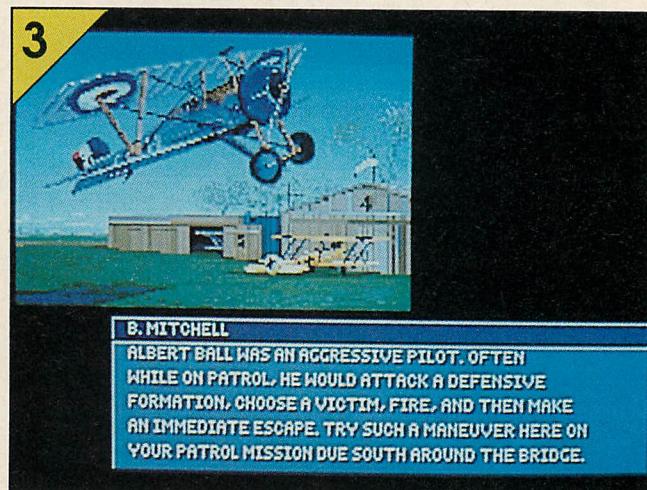
PC PLAYERS

Blue Max: Aces of the Great War

Neil Randall

II, but rather alone or in small fighting groups. One of the most memorable groups was Richthofen's "Flying Circus."

A number of computer games based on aerial combat in World War I are now being released. First off the mark is Three-Sixty's *Blue*



Max: Aces of the Great War, an extremely enjoyable simulation. Actually, it's not a true simulation, and Three-Sixty doesn't bill it as such. WWI planes couldn't maneuver as well as *Blue Max* allows them to — but then, simulations need not be the immensely complex, inordinately serious programs we've come to expect.

1 The control screen in *Blue Max* lets you register your pilot, choose graphics, set weather conditions, and so on. The VCR option permits instant replays.

2 An enemy plane comes into view, hoping to blow you out of the sky. You'd better start thinking about your next move.

3 At the beginning of the Bloody April campaign, your mission is to shoot down one enemy airplane and then land safely on your own turf. It's not an easy task.

4 The front cockpit view shows two enemy aircraft coming toward you. Quickly get them into your sights and fire, or maneuver to a better angle.

Blue Max really has more in common with an old board game known as *Richthofen's War*. You fly your mission, maneuver your plane to shoot down the enemy, and then land back home to receive your reward. One strong feature that *Blue Max* has in

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six exciting action sequences put you in control of Eliot Ness's elite squad of mafia-busters.

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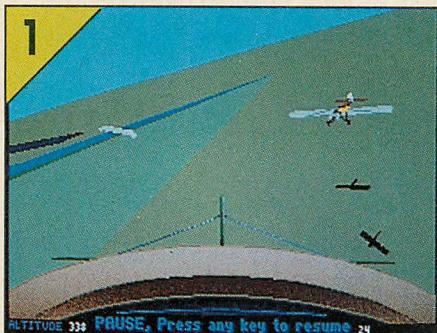
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PC PLAYERS



common with *Richthofen's War* is that you can play it as a strategy game similar to hexagon-based board games. Although you'll spend most of your time inside the cockpit, the strategy option lets you maneuver your craft along a hexagonal path, planning each move rather than performing it in real time. This is an enjoyable way to play for two players, and it eliminates the difficulty of controlling your plane manually. Sometimes it's simply more fun to plan things out.

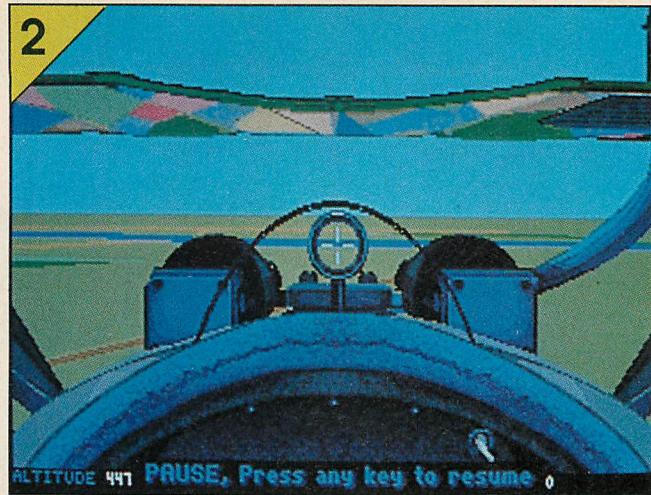
Even if you never use the strategy option, however, *Blue Max*

1 The rear view shows an enemy plane directly behind you. In WWI aerial combat, getting behind your enemy is an enormous advantage.

2 From inside a German Albatross, this river is easy to see. The Allies will be after those bridges, so be sure to keep a close watch.

3 The Fokker DR.I, a famous German fighter, was known for its maneuverability.

4 As a pilot for the Central Powers, your mission is very often simply to shoot down Allied aircraft.



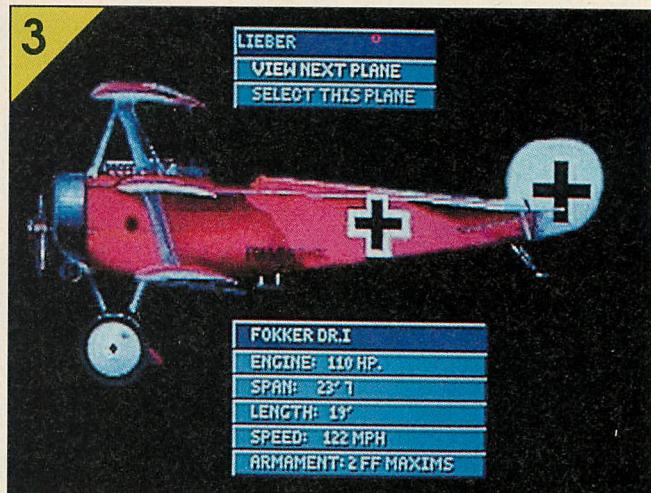
offers a great deal of solid fun. You can sign up as a member of the Allies or the Central Powers, choosing from four different planes for each side. Among them are the Fokker DR.I (made famous by Richthofen himself), the Albatross DIII, the Fokker EIII, the Sopwith Camel, the Nieuport Nie 17, and the Spad VII. Each is rated according to its maximum speed, turning rate, and firing ability, qualities which become apparent if you choose the Realistic Simulator flight option instead of Direct Flight.

Other options also affect the level of realism. For example, choosing EGA over VGA graphics speeds up the animation at the expense of detail. You can also speed things up by turning off the graphics showing the interior of your plane, although once again, considerable detail is lost. You can fly with a joystick, a mouse, or the keyboard. And you can opt for crosshairs to help aim your shots, or choose the much more realistic (and enjoyable) Bullets option. Using the latter, you see your arms raise into position to fire the machine gun,

and you see the bullets stream out toward the target. But the only way you know if you've actually hit an enemy plane is if you see it dive into the ground.

In addition to the strategy option, you can choose Practice Flight, Action Dogfight, Cooperative Dogfight

(two players only), and Campaigns. Practice flight is self-explanatory. Action dogfights pit you against whatever number of enemy planes you decide, or against another human player (in the two-player mode). In cooperative dogfights, you and a friend team up against enemy aircraft. In all of the dogfight games, you succeed only if you land in friendly territory. (Incidentally, unlike some flight simulators, *Blue Max* makes landings mercifully easy).

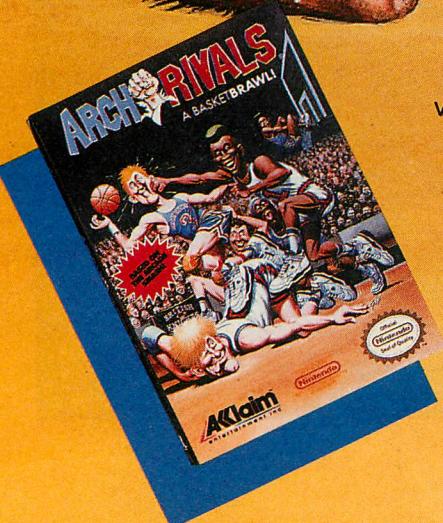


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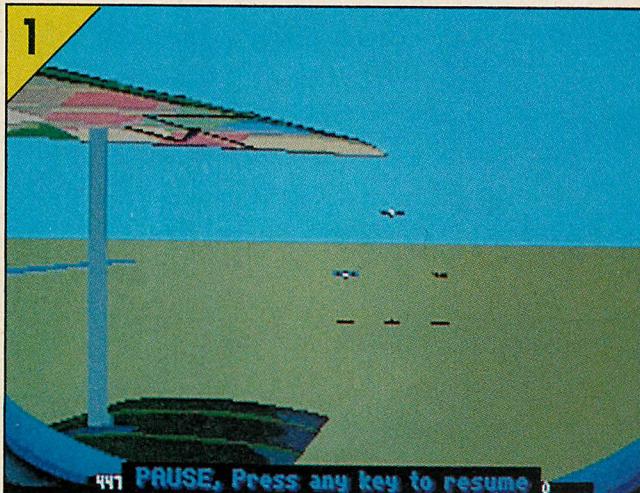
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PC PLAYERS

bombing runs, photo reconnaissance, and attacks on observation balloons. You receive a medal for completing each campaign, and if you succeed at all three you receive the Victoria Cross if you're an Allied pilot, or the Blue Max if you're German.

Flying your plane in *Blue Max* is a simple matter of pulling back on the joystick or mouse to climb,

Above all, *Blue Max* is great fun. If, like me, you're simply not very good at flight simulators, you're still likely to enjoy this game. WWI planes were slower and less responsive than later aircraft, and they lacked all the electronic gadgetry of modern fighters. *Blue Max* gives you a basic airplane and the blue skies of France, and lets you take over from there. It's first-rate.



The campaign option offers the greatest variety and the greatest challenge. You register your pilot as either Central or Allied and then choose from the Bloody April, Battle of Amiens, or Ludendorff Offensive campaigns. You must survive a series of missions, each more difficult than the last. You start each mission with a briefing, and you must land in your own territory after completing the mission. At that point, you can save your progress on disk, change planes, and so on.

The missions include patrols,

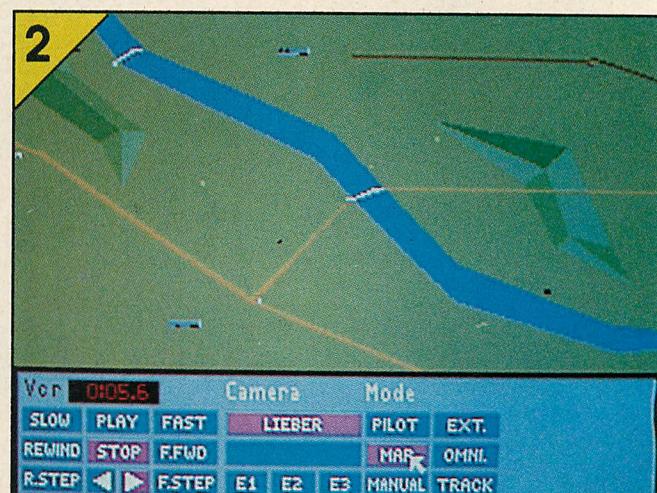
1 Three enemy planes attack from the right, and not a single one is willing to negotiate a settlement. Turn and fire, or dive and return.

2 One benefit of VCR mode is that you can get a map of the whole area. This can be extremely useful when you're lost.

3 This VCR view shows your plane from the rear, about to take on the enemy.

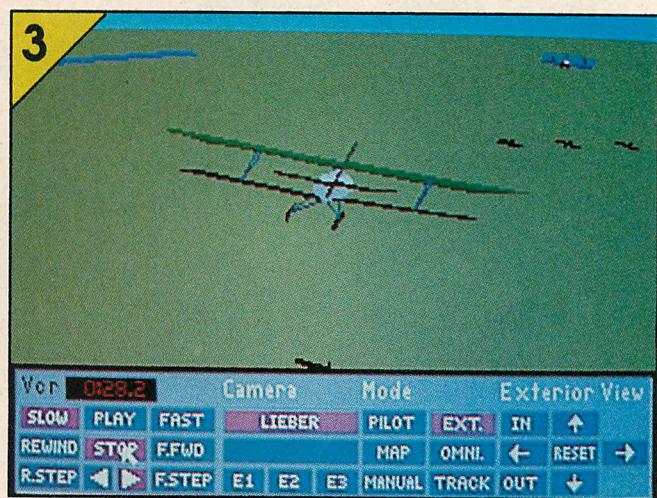
pushing forward to dive, and pushing left or right to turn. The forward view is standard, but the function keys let you look left, right, or behind you. The F5 key gives you a chase view, while F9 gives you a smaller view but additional options such as a compass and gauges. Finally, F10 pauses the game no matter where you are—even if you're trailing smoke on your way to the ground.

Another interesting option in *Blue Max* is VCR mode. This allows you to replay a flight sequence while looking at your plane from a variety of perspectives. You can even watch yourself from another pilot's vantage point! VCR mode, however, is available only in the campaign games.



(System requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory for CGA, EGA, and monochrome graphics; 640K for MCGA, 256-color VGA, and Tandy 16-color graphics; supports Game Blaster, Ad Lib, and Tandy three-voice sound; joystick or mouse optional. Three-Sixty Pacific, 2105 S. Bascom Avenue, Campbell, CA 95008.)

GP



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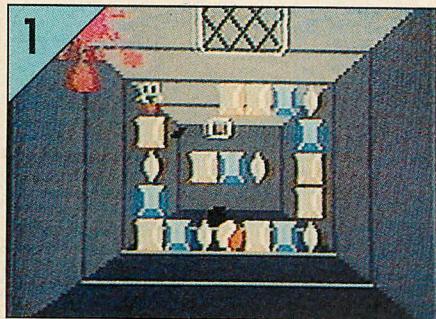
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Although *Robo-Squash* isn't a sports simulation, it's the closest thing we've seen to a regular sports game for the Lynx. It's actually a futuristic cross between tennis, squash, and racquetball.

Like tennis, in *Robo-Squash* players take turns whacking a ball back and forth across a court. But like squash and racquetball, the court is an enclosed room without a net. The walls, floor, and ceiling are all inbounds.

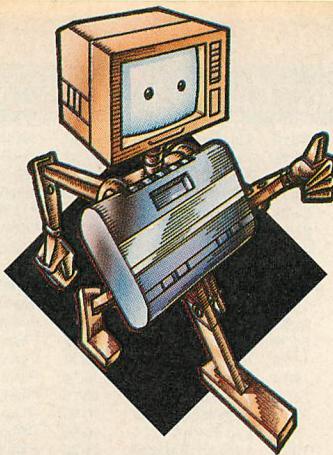
The only exceptions are the back walls at each end of the court. If you allow the ball to get past you and hit your back wall, you lose the volley and your opponent gets the next serve.



The immediate goal in *Robo-Squash*, then, is to get the ball past your opponent and hit his back wall. When that happens, the ball splatters like a juicy tomato and leaves a big red splotch. The first player to do this to his opponent three times wins the round.

But there's another reason not to miss the ball — when it splatters against your wall, the red splotch seriously hampers your vision. That's because the back walls are made of glass, and you are actually positioned *behind* your wall, not inside in the court. To hit the ball, you control a transparent paddle floating in mid-air directly in front of your wall. You can move the paddle in any direction with the control pad.

So far, *Robo-Squash* sounds like



ATARI SAFARI

Robo-Squash

Tom R. Halfhill

1 It's early in the round (lots of bricks remain), but this *Robo-Squash* player has already missed one ball — notice the red splotch at the upper left.

2 The Dragon power-up lets you shoot explosive fireballs at the bricks.

a relatively uncomplicated sports game. But it's not quite that simple.

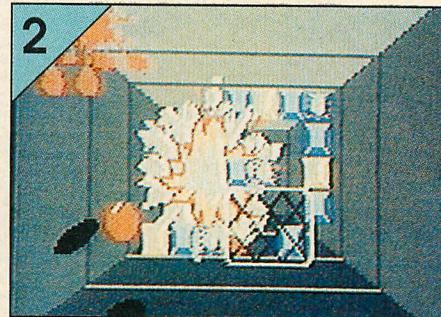
To begin with, each volley starts with a number of bricks floating in the air at mid-court. If you hit a brick with the ball, the brick shatters and you get bonus points. If all of the bricks are cleared before the round ends, a spider suddenly appears and starts crawling around the court. The first player to hit the spider with the ball automatically wins the round.

Scattered among the bricks are power-up items. By hitting a

power-up with the ball, you gain a special ability — but only until you miss the ball or hit another power-up. For example, the Spiral Disk enlarges your paddle; the Mouth allows you to catch the ball, so you can aim your shots; the All-Seeing Eye predicts where the ball will arrive when it's returned by your opponent; and the Dragon allows you to shoot fireballs at the bricks and other power-ups.

The goal in *Robo-Squash* is to outscore your opponent, and that means winning as many rounds as possible. Each time you win a round, a ball on a 4×4 grid changes to a particular color. You get bonus points for lining up rows of balls that match your color.

You can also choose from four



difficulty levels (Klutz, Terrific, Outrageous, and Insane) and play against a human opponent by hooking two Lynxes together with a Comlynx cable.

Despite its apparent complexity, *Robo-Squash* is actually easy to learn. It's also very challenging (especially at the higher difficulty levels), and the graphics are well-done.

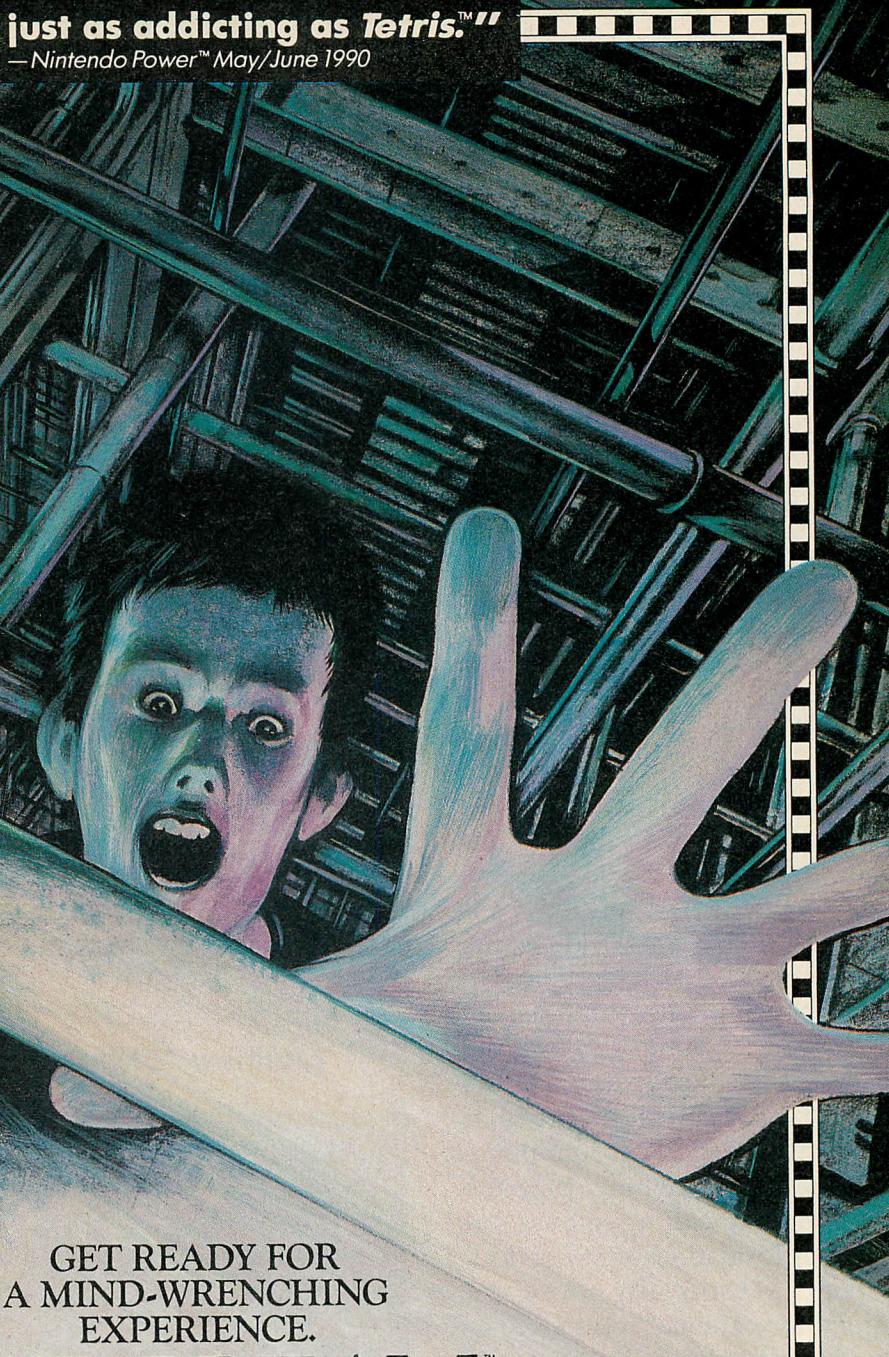
Some players may feel that *Robo-Squash* lacks variety. Trying to outswat the computer does get a little tiring after awhile. It's the type of game that's more fun if you can play a human opponent.

But this is a minor point. If you like sports simulations, you'll probably find *Robo-Squash* an interesting combination of three popular court games.

GP

"...it's just as addicting as *Tetris*."

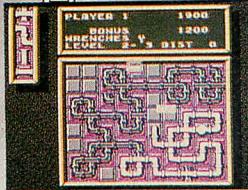
—Nintendo Power™ May/June 1990



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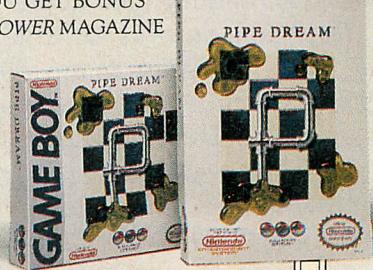


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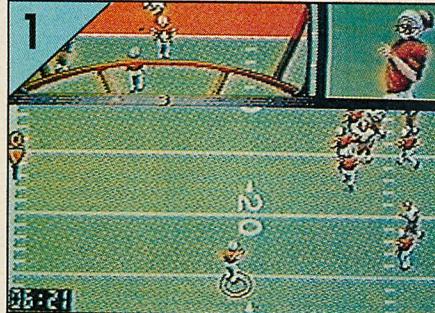
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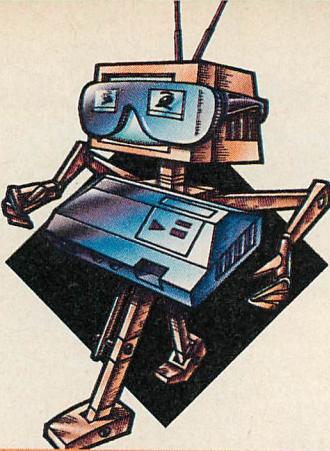
The latest batch of Genesis titles we've seen is a pretty diverse lot. They run the gamut from the arcade hit *Crackdown* to the action-puzzler *Trampoline Terror!* And in between, there's enough to please just about every game player.

Leading things off is the latest in Sega's growing library of celebrity-endorsed sports games: *Joe Montana Football*.



When this title was first announced by Sega of America at the Winter Consumer Electronics Show in January 1990, everyone was eager to see the finished product. For some reason, videogame versions of football have tended to overemphasize one or another aspects of the game, never quite achieving a realistic balance. Some games place so much emphasis on using arcade skills for running, passing, and catching that the strategies of calling plays and choosing formations are all but lost. Others — especially those designed for personal computers — are nothing but strategy. Once you call the play, you do little but sit back and watch the result. Would *Joe Montana Football* be any different? Would it do for football what *Tommy Lasorda Baseball* and *Arnold Palmer Golf* did for their sports?

Joe Montana was originally scheduled for release in the fall of 1990 to coincide with the football season. But in hopes of getting the game out even sooner, Sega began building it from an existing computer football game — *Hard Yardage*. Originally an Activision game



SEGA PLAYERS

Something for Everyone!

Matthew A. Firme

1 *Joe Montana Football*: When you call a pass play, you get a quarterback's-eye view of your receivers. You can toggle between three different receivers by just pressing a button.

2 *Joe Montana Football*: On every down, you'll have your choice of sets, formations, and plays. Montana's choice is always indicated and can be chosen by pressing B.

3 *Joe Montana Football*: You can fumble, intercept a pass, and even be called for pass interference.

for PC compatibles, *Hard Yardage* had also been announced for the Genesis before Sega decided to use it for the basis of *Joe Montana*.

Before *Joe Montana* was finished, however, Electronic Arts unveiled *John Madden Football*. This

game (see our review in last month's *Game Player's*) did such a good job of re-creating the action and the strategy of pro football that we found ourselves asking another question. Could *Joe Montana* make the grade?

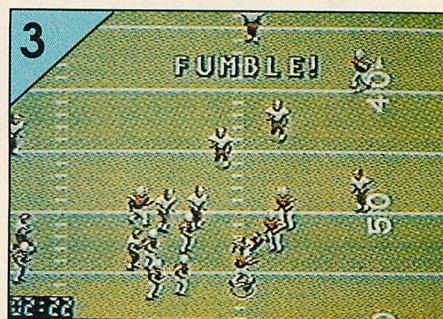
The answer is yes. *Joe Montana*, like *John Madden*, is a solid football game and a lot of fun to play. It gives you a wide variety of defensive and offensive options, and you view the action from overhead and behind the quarterback, as in *John Madden*. You can play a regular season game, go for the Sega Bowl



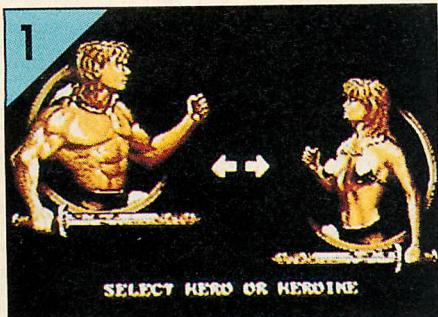
title, or even practice two-minute drills.

The differences between these two games are small, but important. In *John Madden*, for example, you can choose to let the computer throw your passes and make your tackles. Even the player who's under your direct control will move on his own if you don't take action. Play selection — including audibles at the line of scrimmage — is the most important factor in success.

In *Joe Montana*, you must move the player who is under your direct control. If you don't, he'll just stand there. And you can't call



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audibles. This places considerably more emphasis on your arcade skills. To make the big plays, you'll have to be good with the control pad.

The result is two games with different but realistic approaches to football. While *John Madden* tends to place more emphasis on strategy, *Joe Montana* is more of an arcade-type game. But both give you

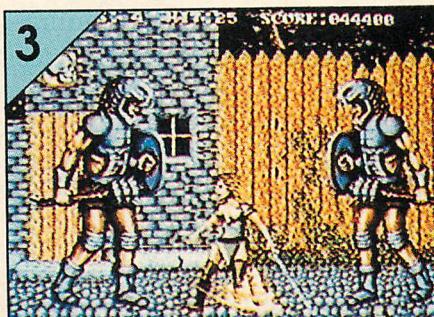
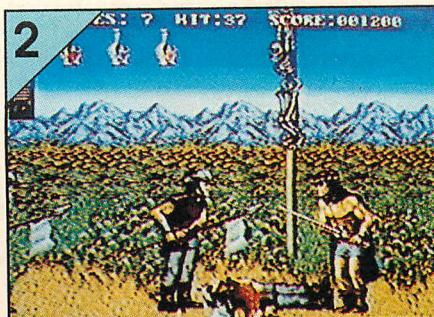
1 *Sword of Sodan*: You can play as either Brodan, the male warrior, or Shardan, his sister. Both are strong fighters.

2 *Sword of Sodan*: After a second or two, the slain enemy at your feet will disappear and a bottle of potion may appear in his place.

3 *Sword of Sodan*: This isn't a game for the squeamish. To get by these brutes, you have to hack off their heads!

4 *Crackdown*: As Agent Ben, your mission is to move toward the exit on the right side of the screen, placing explosives on each marked spot in the enemy stronghold.

5 *Crackdown*: Once you've placed all the explosives, you'd better exit the level before the timers run down.



enough strategy and action to create a very playable and realistic simulation.

There are a few cosmetic differences, too. The players in *John Madden* appear a bit larger on the screen than the guys in *Joe Montana*. And in *John Madden*, the screen scrolls impressively back and forth, left and right, giving a real sense of depth to the field of play. On the other hand, *Joe Montana* has more digitized voices, plus special screens showing Joe himself praising you for making a good catch or a score. *John Madden* lacks these touches.

Joe Montana Football is a welcome addition to the Genesis team. Some may prefer it to *John Madden*, and some may not. Since both are very good games, it really comes down to taste.



What If You Don't Like Football?

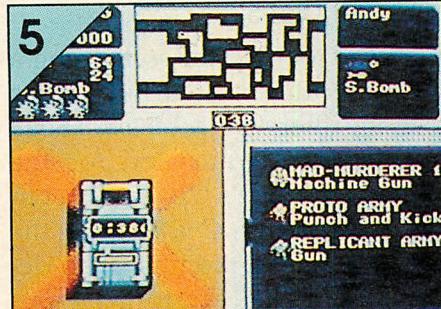
Fear not. There are plenty of alternatives for Genesis owners who just aren't interested in football — no matter what celebrity is endorsing the game.

Maybe you're the type who'd rather battle your way through dangerous medieval villages, fighting evil knights and fierce giants. If so, *Sword of Sodan* might be the game for you.

Sword of Sodan is the latest Genesis game from Electronic Arts and was translated from a popular Amiga game from Innerprise Software. You play as the mighty warrior Brodan or his sister Shardan, the wards of the famed wizard Sodan. Due to the usual odd circumstances, you find yourself pitted against the evil followers of Zoras, a wicked wizard. Armed only with your guardian's sword, you must battle to free an entire kingdom from the wizard's grasp.

One of the first things you'll notice about the game is its high level of violent action. To quote the company's press release, you'll "decapitate fierce giants" and see "buckets of gushing blood." All this is true. *Sword of Sodan*, like RazorSoft's *TechnoCop*, is quite violent at times.

In addition to seeing buckets of gushing blood, you'll also get potions when you defeat enemies. By drinking these potions — one at a time or in combination with other



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potions — you can gain stamina and strength, and even get more lives and powerful flaming swords. However, drinking several different potions at once can also be dangerous. If you combine the wrong ones, you'll be poisoned and slowly lose strength. If you drink one of each type of potion, you'll die immediately, then see a cautionary message on the screen: "Winners don't do drugs."

Although the animation in *Sword of Sodan* is rather stiff compared to many other Genesis titles, the game play is quite challenging. The numerous potions and their many uses add a nice element of strategy, and they can really come in handy when the fighting gets heavy.

Save Those Quarters

If you're looking for something a bit more understated but just as exciting, there's *Crackdown*, a Sega arcade game translated for the Genesis by Sage's Creation. Set in the 21st century, *Crackdown* is the story of an evil scientist who develops artificial life forms — or



ALCs, for Artificial Living Creatures — and plots world domination. As one of two Special Service agents, Ben Breaker or Andy Attacker, it's your mission to plant timed explosives at strategic points (marked with big red X's) throughout the enemy's stronghold.

As in the arcade version, you view the action from overhead in a graphics window that's about one-fourth the size of the screen. (Two people can play at once, each with their own window.) As you move from one red X to another, you'll face a staggering variety of enemies and obstacles. After planting your explosives on each X, you must escape the level before the timers on your bombs go off.

Each mazelike level is more congested than the last. To help you get past the enemy ALCs, you're equipped with a machine gun, a cannon, and a limited supply of smart bombs. The bombs are amazingly powerful, capable of destroying all the enemies on the screen.

The most obvious drawback in *Crackdown* is the very tiny size of the characters. The top part of the screen is occupied by information readouts and a map. Only the graphics windows show the action, and in this small space you view nearly half of the entire level. But even though *Crackdown* doesn't scratch the surface of the Genesis' graphics potential, it's an easy game to get drawn into.

Finally, there's the latest game from DreamWorks: *Trampoline*

Terror! It's the story of a once-happy planet menaced by an evil empire. The empire has surrounded the planet with a gridlike fortress of trampolines and sidewalks. Only by pressing the switches located at various places on the grid can you destroy the fortress.

You are Trampoline Terror, a gifted gymnast. Your mission is to leap all over the giant trampoline,



trying to throw switches to clear each of the game's 33 levels. You have to avoid the different creatures that try to stop you and be careful not to fall from the grid to the planet below.

Trampoline Terror! is a far cry from the violent *Sword of Sodan* — there's no blood to speak of, and the gentle, cartoonish characters frustrate rather than frighten. But the game is very challenging and absorbing, and should appeal to players of all ages. It's a nice change of pace.

GP

1 *Trampoline Terror!*: You must walk over all the switches on each level to advance. By triggering the switches in a certain order — four reds, for example — you earn bonuses.

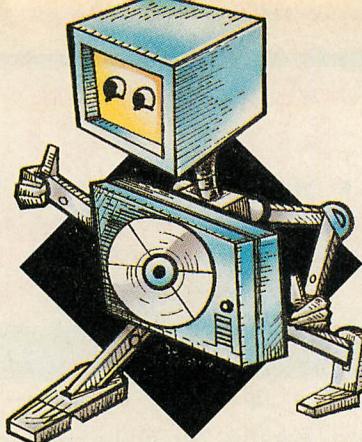
2 *Trampoline Terror!*: Learn when to run and when to use the trampolines. You can jump on each trampoline only a few times before it breaks.

3 *Trampoline Terror!*: When you trigger the last switch on a level, the grid explodes.

For a couple of years now, Accolade has owned the rights to produce computer games bearing the name of golfing great Jack Nicklaus. At first, Accolade's designers concentrated on producing Jack Nicklaus games for PC compatibles, the Amiga, and other popular personal computers. Like some other computer software companies, however, Accolade sees potential in the NEC TurboGrafx-16—and especially in the optional TurboGrafx-CD player.

Jack Nicklaus Turbo Golf is Accolade's first TurboGrafx game. It's available as a two-megabit game cartridge or as a compact disc. Both versions look the same and play identically, but the CD version has five golf courses instead of one and adds a few other features as well. Both versions are extremely welcome, especially since the only other golf game for the TurboGrafx (*Power Golf*) is rather limited in comparison.

The TurboGrafx version of *Jack Nicklaus Golf* is so faithful to the original computer version that it even shares some of the same problems—such as the annoyingly slow screen drawing. (Even the version for the Amiga—a computer that draws screens very quickly—has this defect.) Equally faithful is the putting game, which in all versions is extremely difficult to master. It's too bad that both of these features were carried over to the TurboGrafx version, but fortunately Accolade has preserved all of the good features as well. As a



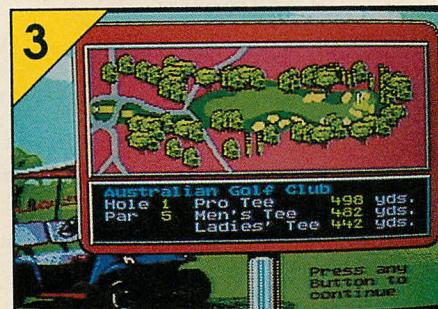
TURBO PLAYERS

Jack Nicklaus Turbo Golf

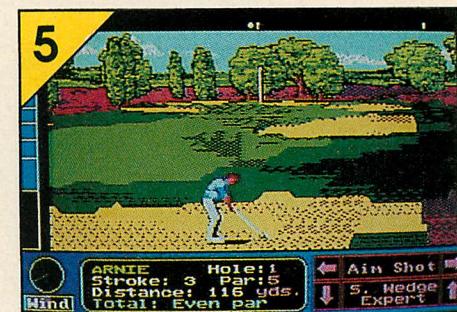
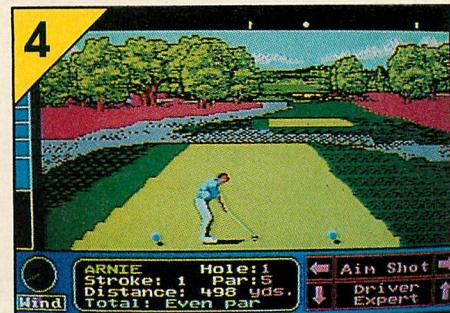
Neil Randall

result, *Turbo Golf* is a very strong simulation.

The level of detail in *Turbo Golf* is superb. Not only can you see



every tree, every cart path, and every obstacle, but you can also tell at a glance if you're standing at the top of a hill looking down or at the bottom looking up. Even the crevices in the ground are quickly apparent. There isn't a flat piece of real estate on the whole golf course, it seems, and you'll find yourself endlessly trying to master the ground's irregularities.



In *Jack Nicklaus Turbo Golf*, you can choose your skill level and whether you want to play computer-controlled or human opponents.

2 At the beginning of each hole, you'll see Jack's smiling face. Pay attention to his advice, because it's always valuable.

3 Before teeing off, you get a bird's-eye view of the hole. You can also call up this view at any time during play.

4 The first hole is a fairly straightforward 498-yard par 5, but notice the strong wind and its unfortunate direction. Why not aim to the right and play the wind?

5 Oh, great! A sand trap on the first hole. Notice how well grades are depicted in *Turbo Golf*—the pin is clearly a few feet higher.

Despite this great detail (or perhaps because of it), the graphics are a little fuzzy. It's possible that the computer game screens were transferred directly to the TurboGrafx, maybe losing something in the translation. Some of the colors seem a bit strange, too.

As mentioned above, the cartridge version of *Turbo Golf* has only one golf course: the Australian Golf Club, where the Australian Open takes place each year. On the CD version of *Turbo Golf*, this famous course is joined by Japan's Saint Creek, Scotland's Royal Troon, Colorado's Castle Pines, and Chicago's Kemper Lakes. Also on the CD version is an additional game option, match play, supplementing the "skins" and stroke play options found on the car-



1 Your golfer follows through after taking a shot. The game tells you how far the shot traveled.

2 Well, nobody's perfect. Trying to play a strong wind, you ended up in a water hazard. Place the ball and be done with it.

3 An approach shot to be proud of — past the lake and right onto the green. Now a good putt will finish it off.

4 Putting is far from easy in *Turbo Golf*. Pay strict attention to the "break meter" at the bottom left corner of the screen.

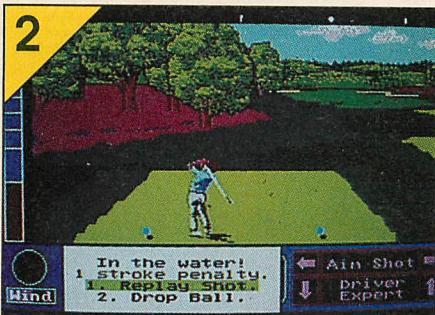
5 A very near miss on a 17-foot putt. Get used to near misses, because there are bound to be plenty.

TURBO PLAYERS

tridge. Finally, the CD gives you Jack's digitized voice and two more musical soundtracks.

The heart of any golf game is hitting the golf ball, and this is the same with either version of *Turbo Golf*. You start by choosing the type of game you want to play. Stroke play is what you see on TV, where golfers try to finish 18 holes with the fewest number of strokes. Skins is a betting game in which you play to win each individual hole, rather than the entire course; the winner of the hole takes the money, and then you bet again on the next hole.

After selecting the type of game, you choose how many golfers will play, and which golfers are controlled by the computer or other human players. Using the



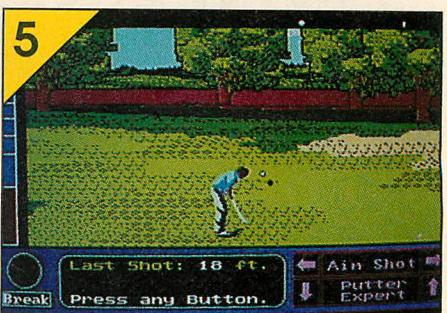
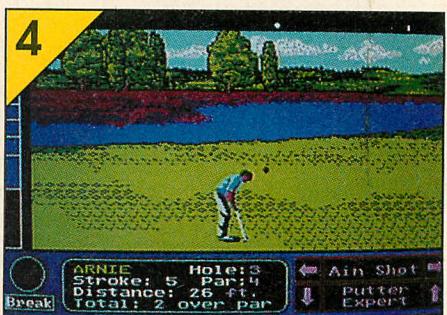
TurboTap accessory, up to four people can participate in *Turbo Golf*. You can also play by yourself, either solo or against computer opponents. The computer opponents range from rank beginners to first-rank pros, with Nicklaus himself offering the stiffest (and almost unbeatable) opposition.

Be aware, though, that taking on computer foes eats up a lot of time. You must stand by while each computer player takes his swings, which means the screen must be redrawn over and over again. That's a slow process in this game.

Next you choose your skill level — beginner or expert — and whether to use the ladies', men's, or pro tees. The ladies' tees are the closest to the hole and the pro tees the furthest from it. (That's the way real golf courses are designed.)

Finally, it's game time. At the beginning of each hole, Nicklaus appears on-screen to offer some advice. Next you see an overhead view of the hole, which you can also access at any time during play.

At the beginner level, the computer chooses a club for you, although you can pick a different one if you like. At the expert level



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you choose your own club. The manual lists the maximum distances you can expect to hit the ball with each club, but your choice must also be guided by such factors as the wind speed and direction, where the ball lies on the course, and such complexities as whether or not you're shooting uphill or downhill.

Another factor to consider is where you want the ball to land. Aiming straight for the pin isn't always the best idea, because you must compensate for roll and bounce. Your tee shots and approach shots may take a long time to master, but this is golf as it should be.

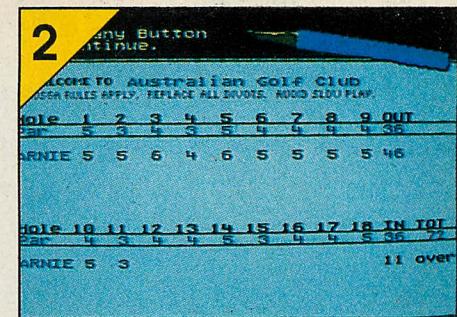
To swing, pay attention to the power bar, not the golfer. You can readjust your golfer's viewpoint if you wish, but for the most part he or she will be facing in the right direction. Then press the I button, wait for the power bar to reach the

amount of strength you want, and then press the button again. Now wait for the power bar to fall to the 0 percent line, and press the button a third time.

The higher the power bar reaches before you press the button the first time, the more powerful your swing. Of course, you don't always want to hit the ball with all your power. Stopping the bar *before* it falls back to the 0 percent line causes the ball to hook (curve left if your golfer is right-handed, or curve right if your golfer is left-handed). Stopping the bar *after* it reaches the 0 percent line causes the ball to slice (curve right if your golfer is right-handed, or curve left if your golfer is left-handed).

Generally, it's a good idea to always try for a straight shot — in other words, to press the button for the third time just as the power bar reaches the 0 percent mark. Eventually, though, you must learn to use your power, hooks, slices, and the wind to make the best possible shots. That's what makes golf challenging — and exasperating.

Putting, as mentioned before, is difficult in *Turbo Golf*. Before doing anything else, head to the practice green and learn how to read the "break meter." This meter, which appears at the bottom left of the screen during putts, tells you



1 Playing the wind, you intentionally sliced around the trees to reach the green. Problem is, you can't see where the ball has landed.

2 The scorecard tells all. Not exactly a championship performance, but not a disaster, either. Next time, nobody'll be able to touch you....

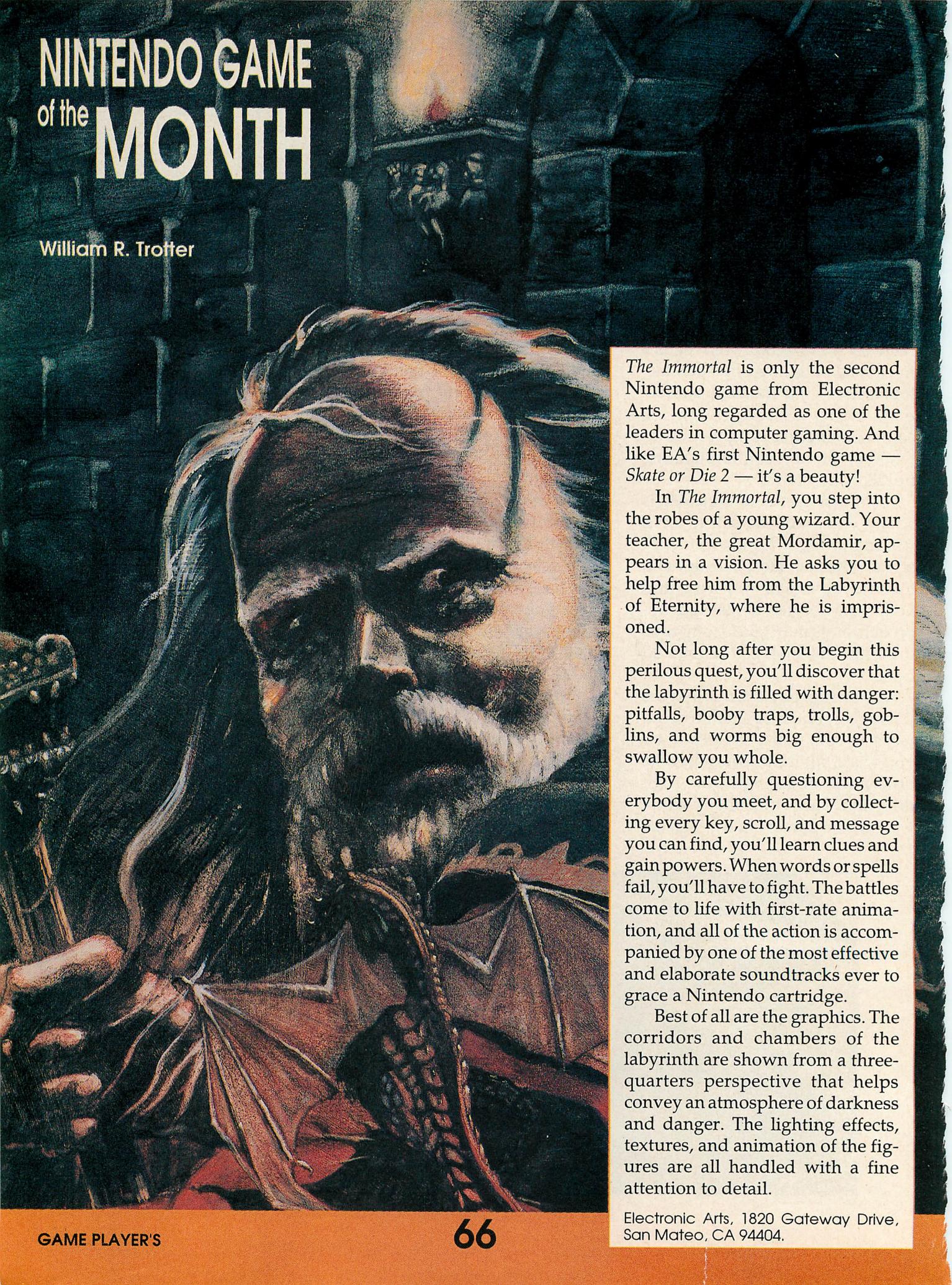
which way the green slopes. (No part of this game, it seems, is played on level ground.) Then learn how to aim the ball, because *Turbo Golf* punishes you thoroughly if you don't aim correctly. Finally, learn how to judge the power you'll need for your putts. In this game, it's easy to tap a ball toward the hole and watch it disappear down a grade to rest 25 feet or more from the original destination.

Unlike *Power Golf*, the first TurboGrafX golf game, *Jack Nicklaus Turbo Golf* is a true simulation. You must think about the wind, trees, sand traps, cart paths, and the kind of shot that's required. You're also playing on an accurate re-creation of a real golf course. As a result, *Turbo Golf* is a difficult game to master. But that also means it won't wear out its welcome in the foreseeable future. All things considered, it's a very good game.



NINTENDO GAME of the MONTH

William R. Trotter



The Immortal is only the second Nintendo game from Electronic Arts, long regarded as one of the leaders in computer gaming. And like EA's first Nintendo game — *Skate or Die 2* — it's a beauty!

In *The Immortal*, you step into the robes of a young wizard. Your teacher, the great Mordamir, appears in a vision. He asks you to help free him from the Labyrinth of Eternity, where he is imprisoned.

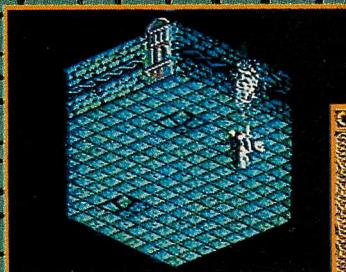
Not long after you begin this perilous quest, you'll discover that the labyrinth is filled with danger: pitfalls, booby traps, trolls, goblins, and worms big enough to swallow you whole.

By carefully questioning everybody you meet, and by collecting every key, scroll, and message you can find, you'll learn clues and gain powers. When words or spells fail, you'll have to fight. The battles come to life with first-rate animation, and all of the action is accompanied by one of the most effective and elaborate soundtracks ever to grace a Nintendo cartridge.

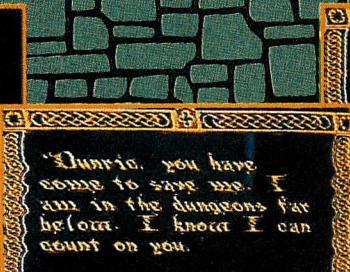
Best of all are the graphics. The corridors and chambers of the labyrinth are shown from a three-quarters perspective that helps convey an atmosphere of darkness and danger. The lighting effects, textures, and animation of the figures are all handled with a fine attention to detail.

Electronic Arts, 1820 Gateway Drive,
San Mateo, CA 94404.

THE IMMORTAL



The game begins with a visit from the spirit of the great magician, Mordamir.



"Dunric, you have come to save me. I am in the dungeons far below. I know I can count on you."

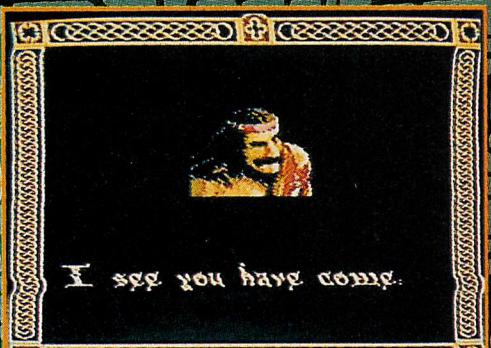


"Don't interfere!"



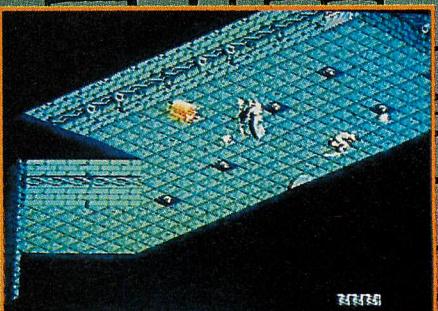
You'll have to fight a goblin before you can get your first clue from a freed prisoner.

During combat, pay close attention to the meters. Green shows your life energy and red shows your fatigue.

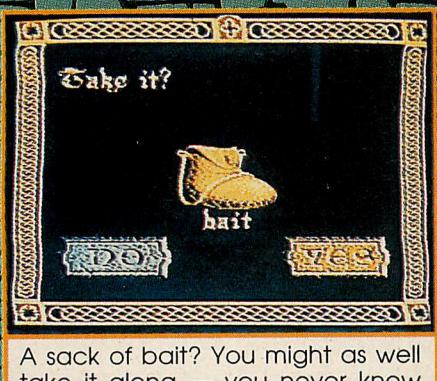


"I see you have come."

Be sure to talk to everyone you meet. This prisoner has a key that you'll need soon.



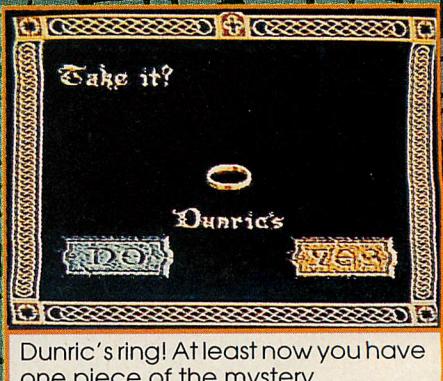
Open all the treasure chests you come across. Inside, you'll find gold and other useful items.



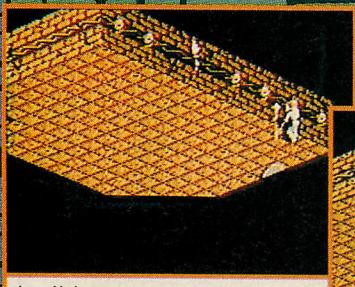
A sack of bait? You might as well take it along — you never know when it may come in handy.



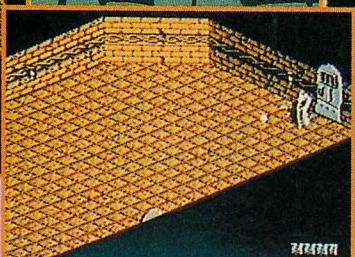
Be sure to search the bodies of all dead foes. If you find something, take it, no matter how useless it may seem at the time.



Dunric's ring! At least now you have one piece of the mystery.



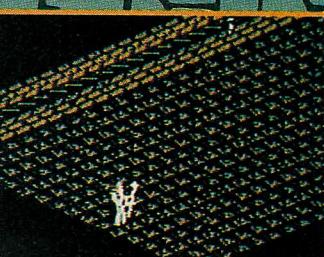
In this room, walk along the edges. Walking in the center activates hidden crossbows.



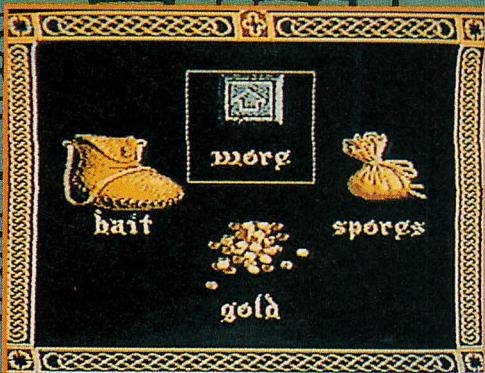
Light a torch before venturing into this room. It'll help you see the shadows of the invisible shadow-creatures that dwell there.



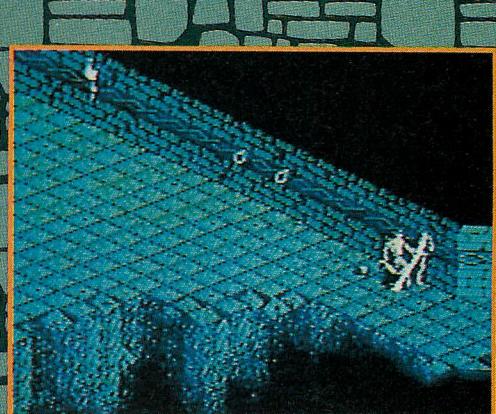
If you must fight a shadow-creature, use a steady, forehand-backhand slashing motion.



Don't leave the shadow-creatures' room without finding the amulet hidden there. But don't read the runes on the amulet, whatever you do!



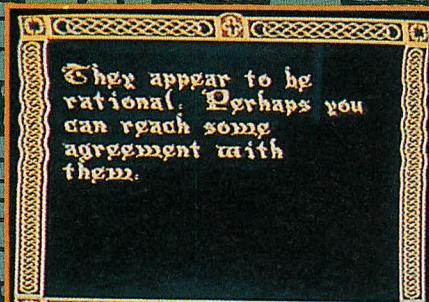
Check the contents of your wizard's pack now and then. Every item you find has a purpose, but you must be in the right place at the right time.



Use the amulet to reflect the beam of light onto the floor mechanism that opens the next level.



Piles of straw are for sleeping; this restores your character's energy.



While you sleep, dreams will come to you, bearing hints for the game ahead.



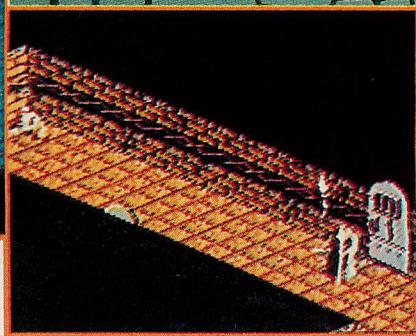
Copy your certificate password very carefully.



Slime creatures can turn you to bones with a touch. You can't beat them, so avoid them. Later, you'll find one of them most useful.



That dot in the middle of the floor is a red gem. You'll need it, plus two other gems, to clear this level.

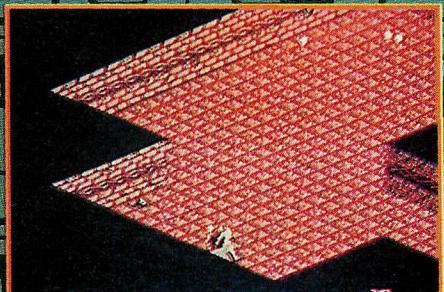


Search the skeleton for a powerful weapon, but don't probe too deeply into that pile of bones or you'll get a nasty surprise.

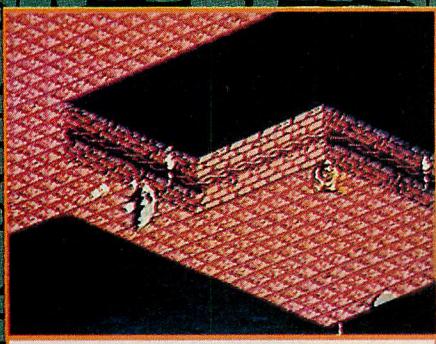
The old man in the corner has a gem you need, but he won't give it up until after you've found the Dust of Compliance.



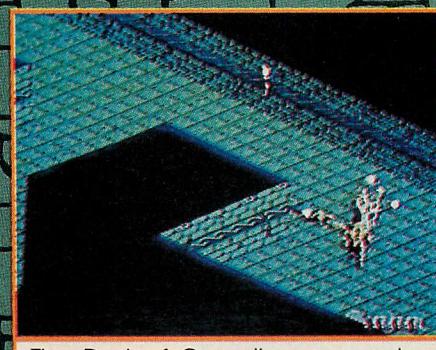
About halfway down into the dungeon, you'll start meeting trolls. They are engaged in a war with the goblins.



When you enter the will-o-wisp room, go first to the stone on the left. It contains a jewel you need.



Use the will-o-wisp charm to control those pesky little spirits.



The Dust of Compliance can be found on a dead goblin.

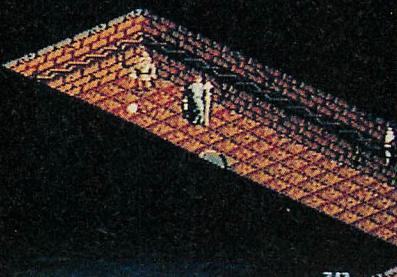


In the hall of the Goblin King, use an item from your pack — and that mound of dirt — to plant the seeds of future progress. Then retreat quickly, or you too will die in the throne room.

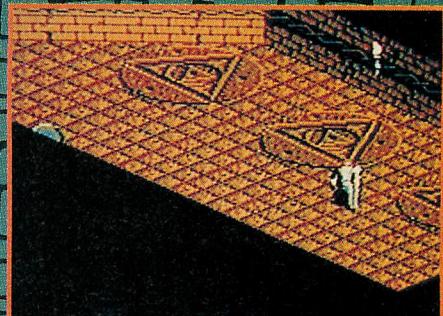


I need water.

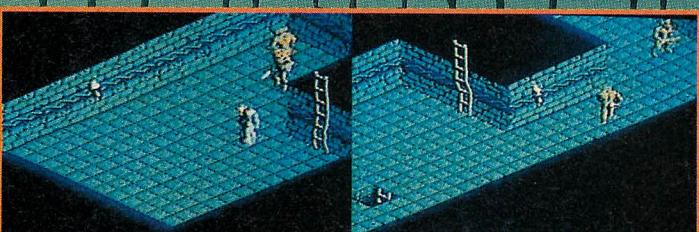
If you give the injured Goblin King a drink, he'll give you a valuable clue.



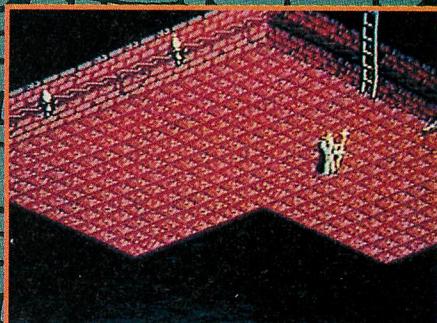
Once you've administered the Dust of Compliance, the crotchety old man becomes eager to give you his gem.



Refer to the Goblin King's clues to solve the puzzle in this room. But did he tell you the right order of things, or did he mix them up?



One of these fellows has a ring that lets you disguise yourself as a troll. Use the disguise to sneak past the guard.



Because you gave the Goblin King some water, he'll let you pass when you encounter him again.



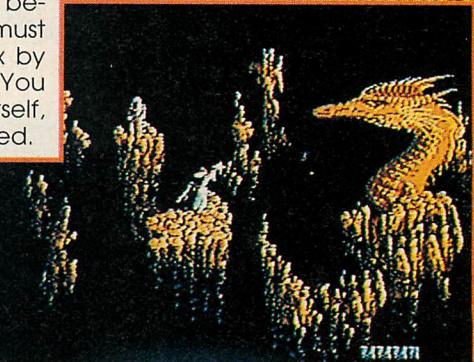
Deadly spikes shoot up through the tiles on this floor. Take time to observe their pattern before trying to cross.



When you throw the ritual knife at these two guards, they'll start fighting each other. While they're busy, you can sneak past them.



The next-to-last boss lies beyond this whirlpool. You must lure him into the vortex by getting close to him. You may get sucked in yourself, but you could be rescued.



The Immortal's final screens demonstrate just how good eight-bit Nintendo graphics can be.

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STRIDER

Matthew A. Firme

As the 1990s drew to a close, the nations of the world were finally working together, putting aside their differences to concentrate on making the planet a better place to live. It seemed certain that the 21st century would be the best era that humanity had ever known.

Then, one day, strange objects appeared in the skies over the European nation of Kazafu. Soon afterward, an army of strange creatures and machines appeared in Kazafu's capital, led by the self-proclaimed Grand Master Meio. In just a few days the invaders leveled the city and began marching across the continent. Soon the aliens held all of Europe. No army in the world could stop them. And still they advanced....

Reports of the alien invasion were picked up on the small island of Moralos, home of the Striders. This elite band of warriors was Earth's last hope of defeating the alien hordes. The Striders began their attack by sending out Hiryu, the youngest man

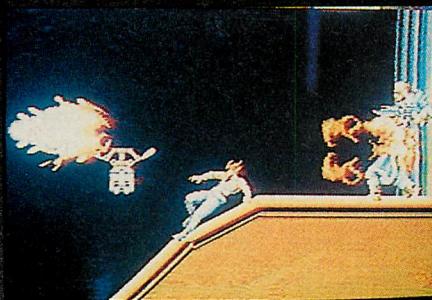
ever to become an A-class Strider. Strider Hiryu sets off on his dangerous mission, alone but strengthened by the encouraging words of his fellow Striders.



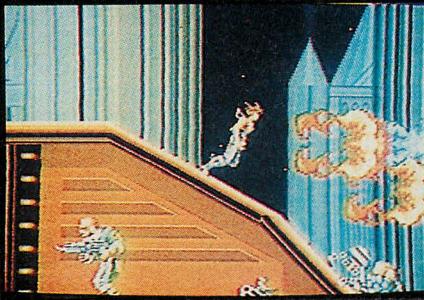
Strider Hiryu flies his glider into the capital of Kazafu. His athletic speed and acrobatic agility are his greatest strengths — but will they be enough to defeat the powerful aliens?



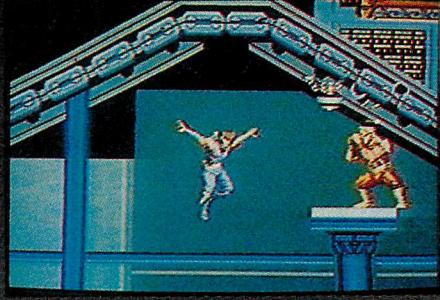
As you move through Kazafu, attack the alien guards as soon as they're within reach of your plasma sword. If you wait, they become harder to hit.



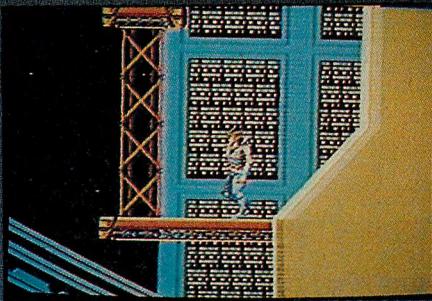
Sometimes these whirring, flying droids carry power-ups. To get the power-up, you have to destroy the droid, then slash a capsule which appears.



Some capsules contain friendly robots like this one scurrying ahead of you. The robots zip all around the screen, destroying any enemies they touch, and shooting whenever Strider uses his sword.



The first major enemy you'll meet is Stroboya. He's tough, muscular, and quick, so begin slashing as soon as he moves. After he's defeated, dodge beneath the platform to avoid the fire that spews all over the room.



After leaving Stroboya's room, leap up and climb along the steel girders and onion domes of the city. Watch for power-ups and collect as many as you can.



If you already have two droids, the third capsule you'll find contains this mighty mechanical panther. You'll also find a sword-shaped power-up atop this dome. It extends the range of your plasma sword.



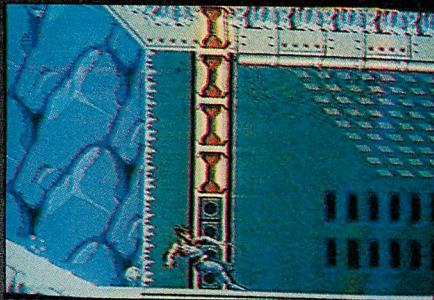
Inside this dome, a laser cannon rises from the floor and begins firing blasts that ricochet around the room. Move in as close to the cannon as you can and stay low, striking it repeatedly.



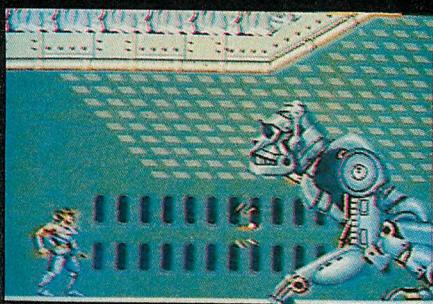
At the end of the first stage you'll face Urbolos, an enormous, mechanized caterpillar made of Grand Master Melo's soldiers. Only his head is vulnerable to your attack.



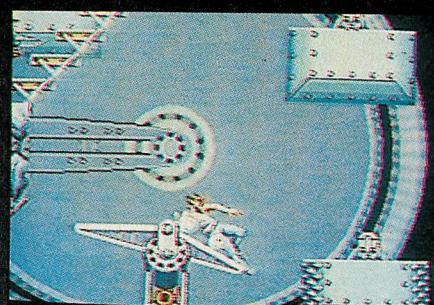
Strider's next destination is Siberia. Wolves attack from both sides, so be ready to guard your back. Get the power-up on the ledge — it's a sword extender, and you're going to need it.



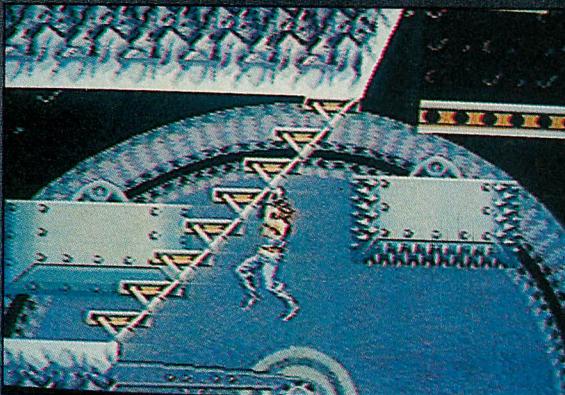
When you approach the building at the edge of the icy slope, you'll have to slide to squeeze under this wall before it falls. If you don't make it, step back and strike the wall until it explodes, then slide through the opening before it closes.



Despite his awesome size and ferocity, Mecha Pon is a sluggish foe. Advance toward him, swinging your sword constantly. Once you've defeated him, leap to the wall at the right to avoid the flame that erupts from the fallen monster.



Move past Mecha Pon and up a long, dangerous shaft to this mine. Leap to the top of this platform to break open the capsules on the revolving wheel.



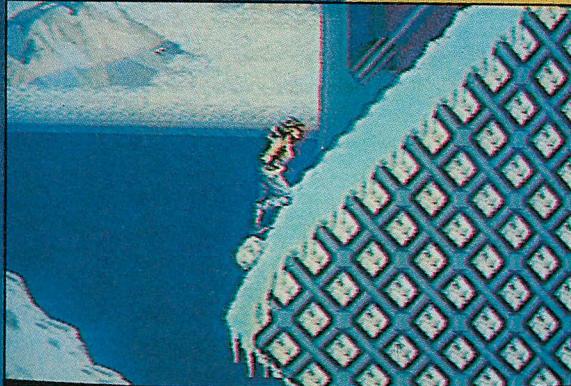
Once you have the power-ups you need, leap up and move along this girder. When a smooth platform comes around on the wheel, leap to it, pull yourself to the top, and then jump up to the red beam at the top right of the screen.



Hovering high above the mine, this alien nightmare attacks you with his three-way pistol and guided missiles. Lure him down by sliding to the right, then quickly back to the left. When he lands, slide into him and attack.



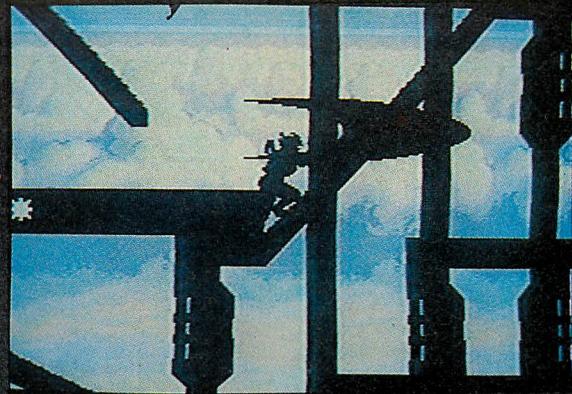
After defeating the alien, run full-speed down this slope. If you don't pick up enough momentum, you won't be able to make the long jump waiting at the end of the slope.



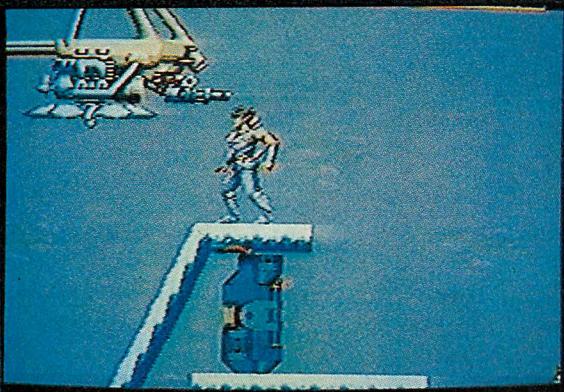
At the last second, Strider leaps the chasm and lands on the other side. Be ready to battle some more vicious wolves.



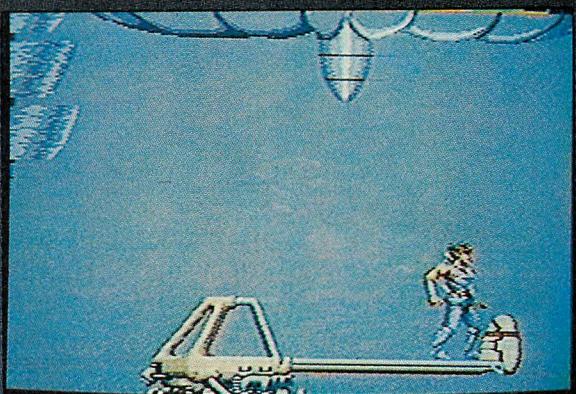
From here, there's no place to go but up. Leap onto the icy ledge, but don't move too quickly. Fierce droids wait on platforms above.



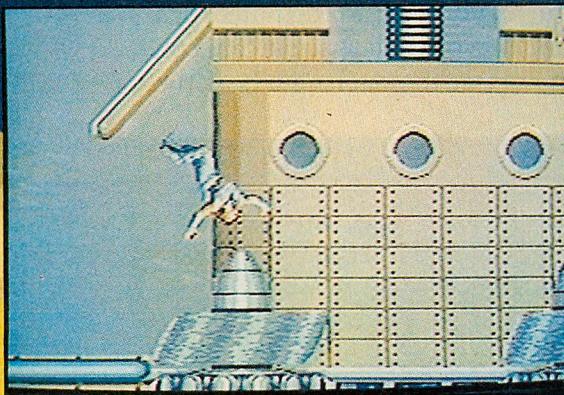
Move just far enough up the slope to destroy the droid with your plasma sword. As the lightning flashes, watch out for arcs of electricity all around you.



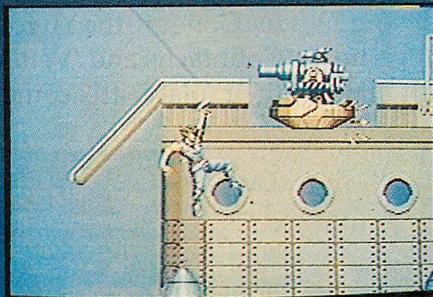
Once again you'll be moving up — this time high above the earth.



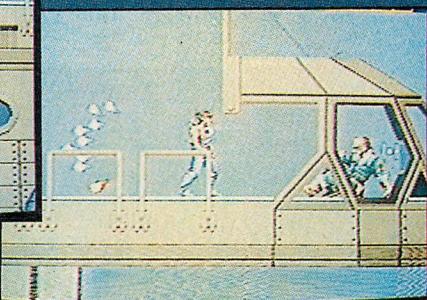
You'll hijack three of these flying ships. The third will take you to the *Balog*, Master Meio's flying battleship.



Leap carefully over the whirling blades of the *Balog*'s fans — they can knock you off the ship.



When the long bar at the left of the ship tilts upward, leap to this position. When you pull yourself up, you should immediately jump over the cannon, then slide into the guards that attack you.



Smash through the door of this control booth, defeat the guard, and you're through! Next, you'll penetrate to the very heart of the *Balog*.

Next month: Strider continues his adventure on the *Balog*, then journeys to the Amazon and Grand Master Meio's headquarters.

GP



GAME PLAYER'S

COMPUTER GAME of the MONTH

Test Drive III: THE PASSION

Neil Randall

By now you must be a bit tired of driving around those old cars. All you had in *Test Drive II*, after all, was a trashy little Lamborghini Countach, a couple of silly old Porsches, and some embarrassing Corvettes. Or, if you chose a different package, you had some gas-guzzlers from the 1950s and '60s with 400-

plus cubic-inch engines. Hardly worth the trouble of backing out of the driveway, right?

Well, that's all changed. With the release of *Test Drive III: The Passion*, Accolade has appealed anew to the would-be supercar owner in all of us. Gone are the Yugo-like Countachs and 'Vettes; in their place are some in-

credibly fast (and incredibly expensive) road machines. So it's back to the roads — or, in this case, even some fields.

If you've never played one of the previous installments of *Test Drive*, here's a quick rundown. The *Test Drive* series puts you behind the wheel of a world-class supercar. You see the steering wheel, the

System requirements: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles (eight-megahertz or faster computer recommended); 640K minimum memory; EGA, MCGA, VGA, or Tandy 16-color graphics; mouse or joystick optional; includes 5.25- and 3.5-inch disks. Accolade, 550 S. Winchester Blvd., San Jose, CA 95128.



The opening screens give an indication of the detailed VGA graphics in *Test Drive III*. Be prepared for some visual delights.



You can choose your own car, course, and driver.

gearshift, the dashboard, and, of course, the road, other cars, and miscellaneous scenery. Your goal is to make it from point to point in the shortest possible time. You can play against the clock, against computer-controlled cars, or against human opponents.

The original *Test Drive* offered some generic scenery, and *Test Drive II* improved on that by putting you on the California highways from Oregon to Mexico. In both games, you had to dodge slower-moving traffic, all kinds of road hazards, and the ubiquitous state troopers. If you got stopped, you lost time and points.

Test Drive III adds impressive new features. Rain and snow can come pelting down without

warning, and you can respond by switching on your windshield wipers. Your headlights now work, too, and it's a good thing, considering that you spend a lot of time driving by moonlight. *Test Drive III* also offers two outside views of your car. The chase-car view lets you observe yourself from

any imaginable angle, and the instant replay gives you the same options for actions you've just performed. Want to watch yourself slip by that slow-moving truck and fly over the hill? Just turn on the replay, and adjust the camera as you wish.

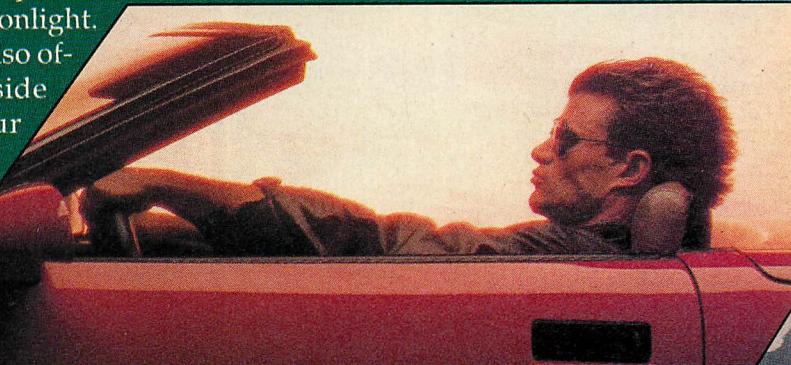


Another options screen lets you choose your skill level and your opponent.

The northern California scenery in *Test Drive III* is called "Pacific to Yosemite." It takes you from Paso Robles to Tioga Pass by way of Monterey and Mariposa. Accolade plans to release add-on disks with additional cars and scenery. Although it would be nice to tackle some roads in the European Alps

or maybe even the Alaska Highway, the current offering is challenging enough.

But the biggest draw in *Test Drive III* is the new cars.



Lamborghini, Porsche, and General Motors are the contributors once more, but things have changed over the past couple of years. The legendary Countach has been replaced by the soon-to-be-legendary Lamborghini Diablo. Equally exciting is the new Pininfarina Mythos. Most interesting of all, though, is the Chevrolet CERV III, because who ever thought a Chevy would be this advanced? Three cars are all you get, but with these three in your driveway you're bound to attract some attention.



CERV III Chevrolet

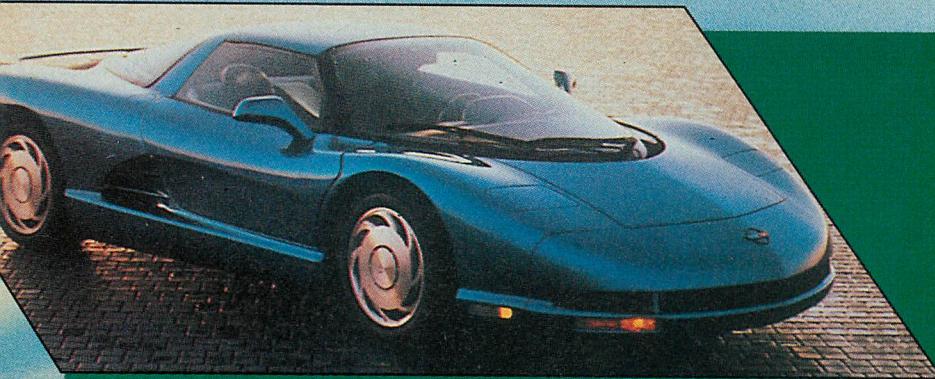
Height: 45.15 inches

Curb Weight: 3400 pounds

Cost: \$300,000 - 400,000

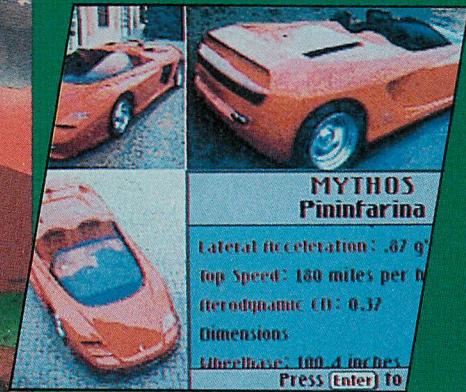
Corporate Experimental Research Vehicle
Engine: 5.7 liter, Twin Turbocharged
Press [Enter] to select

The Chevrolet CERV III gives us a hint of what the Corvette may ultimately become. Better start saving your money now.



The most expensive of the three is the Pininfarina Mythos. Listing at over \$2.5 million, it promises a top speed of 180 mph and a 0-to-60 time of 6.2 seconds. (At least, that's what the game's manual says; not many of us will ever find out for sure.)

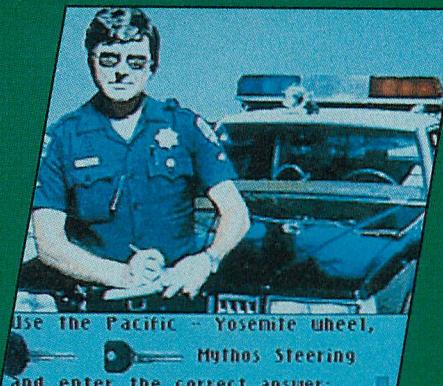
If you're on a budget, go for the Lamborghini Diablo—it lists for a mere \$200,000. Powered by a V-12, it goes from 0 to 60 in



At \$2.5 million, the Pininfarina Mythos is hardly the car for running the kids to baseball practice.



The Lamborghini Diablo is the most affordable car in *Test Drive III*, listing for a mere \$200,000.



The code-wheel copy protection requires you to find the right key combination, and even in VGA graphics these keys are hard to read.



Here you are behind the wheel of your dream car, the Pininfarina Mythos. Five speeds, a simple but elegant dashboard, and approaching twilight. What could be better?



Each time you crash, you lose one of your five lives.



When it starts to get dark, don't forget to turn on your headlights. They're also useful in tunnels.

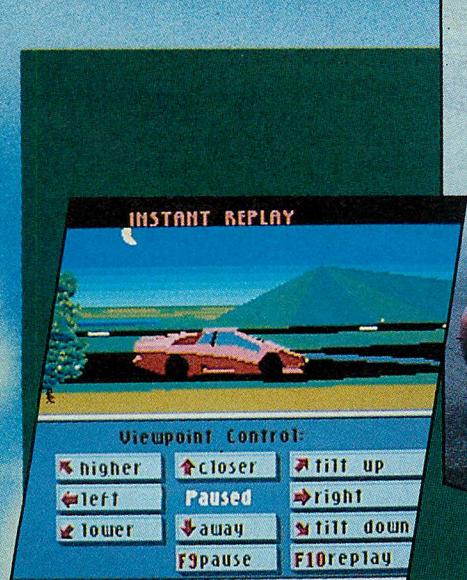
about 4 seconds, with a top speed of more than 200 mph. But watch out for the speed bumps.

The most surprising car is Chevrolet's CERV III (Corporate Experimental Research Vehicle III). Chevrolet has never tried to com-

pete head-on with Lamborghini or Porsche, and the famous Corvette is regarded as a kind of baby sister to those supercars. But the CERV III holds its own in terms of both price and performance. For a mere \$400,000, you get a 0-to-60 time of 3.9 seconds and a top speed of 225 mph. You also get a wealth of automation, all under the control of a nose-mounted computer. It's a pretty smart car, and not just in looks.

If you've played one of the





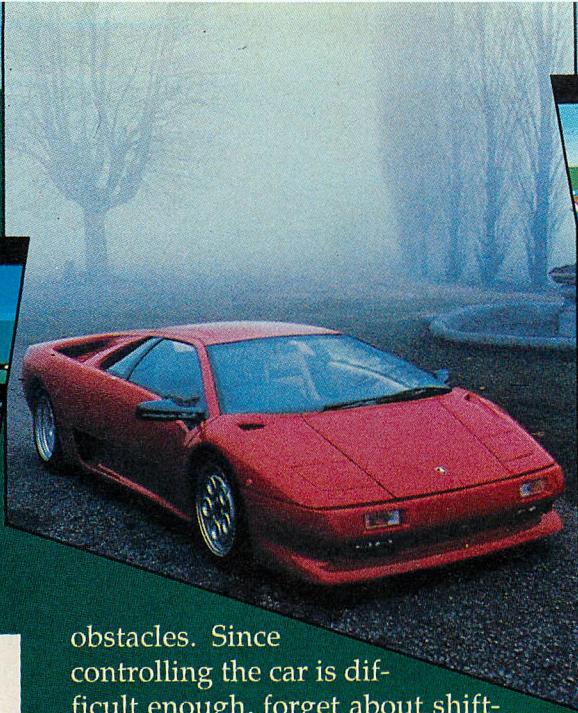
The instant-replay screen shows a "film" of your most recent actions from any angle you wish.



This instant-replay screen shows the Mythos from above and behind, with a good view of surrounding scenery. In some views you can even see cars going by on overpasses.

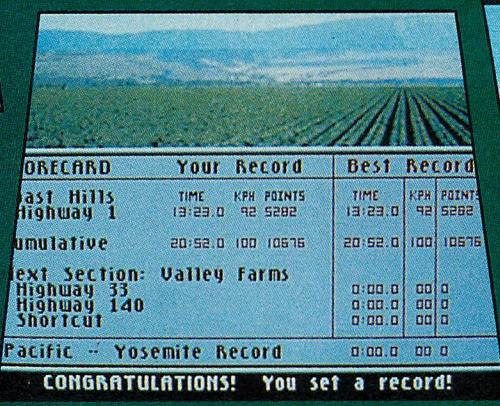


When you reach a stop sign, you can turn in any direction you want. This is a good time to check your maps.



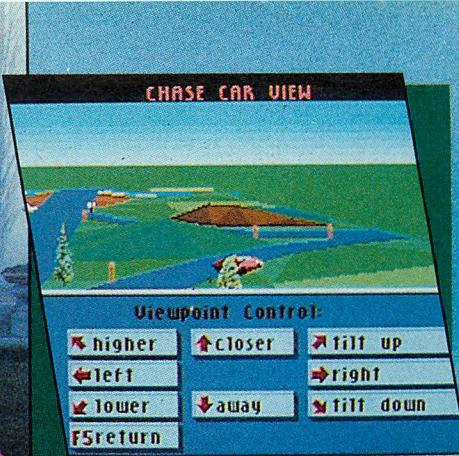
obstacles. Since controlling the car is difficult enough, forget about shifting for the first few drives. It's also a good idea to start off by racing against the clock instead of the computer-controlled drivers. You'll crash less often, and you won't be distracted by attempts to run the other guys off the road.

And by the way, you *can* drive off the road in *Test Drive III*. There



The first checkpoint! Not the best time, certainly, but at least you got here alive. And you can always make the excuse that you were taking pictures along the way.

are various routes you can take to get from point to point, and most are shown on the maps. Some routes, however, are uncharted and must be discovered. You're free to turn off the road at any point and drive across the hills and fields. If you get lost, just press the F6 key



Like instant replay, the chase-car view lets you observe your car from any angle — but in real time. Here's one of the many forks in the road.

and you'll be taken back to the road. Or you can use the chase-car view to spot your location from above.

One of the many indications that the designers of *Test Drive III* have been listening to what gamers want is the absence of gas stations. As the manual ex-



The replay view shows what a terrific day it is for a drive. But it's time to concentrate on reaching the next checkpoint.

plains, *Test Drive III* assumes some intelligence on the part of the driver. After all, you've forked out anywhere from \$200,000 to \$2.5 million for a car, so the game assumes you were smart enough to stop for a fill-up before starting your drive.

Not that your expensive car



Yep, the wipers really work. Now all the game needs is some windshield-washer fluid to run dry.



If you wish, you can head off the road and into the trees behind the barn, but you'd better be careful not to crash.

is maintenance-free. You can knock your wheels out of alignment, blow your engine, and even ruin your brakes. You regain full performance at each checkpoint, but until then a damaged car can make things extremely difficult.

The chase-car and instant-replay views are welcome additions. You'll find yourself switching to these viewpoints, if only to admire the excellent graphics. The view while racing along the moonlit seashore in a Mythos is a sight to behold, especially if your computer is fast enough to handle VGA graphics at a speed that makes the



game's high-detail option worthwhile. Even with EGA, however, this game impresses.

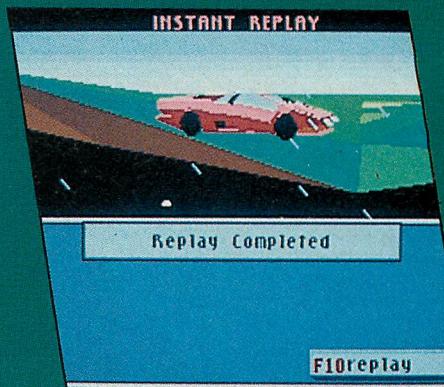
Ultimately, though, any game must be judged on how enjoyable it is to play. For a host of *Test Drive* fanatics, that question has already been answered. For others, it's a bit trickier. If you like the idea of steering a supercar past a beautiful backdrop of well-rendered scenery, watching night change into day, and trying to avoid the speed cops, you'll like this game a lot. But if you prefer arcade-style shoot-em-ups, role-playing games, or graphics adventures, you probably won't like *Test Drive III* or any similar driving game.

Perhaps the best thing that can be said about *Test Drive III* is that



There's no problem driving off-road in this game, although it would be a bit less risky with a Jeep. In this case, you've avoided an accident by taking a detour around the hills. But a police car awaits your return to the highway.

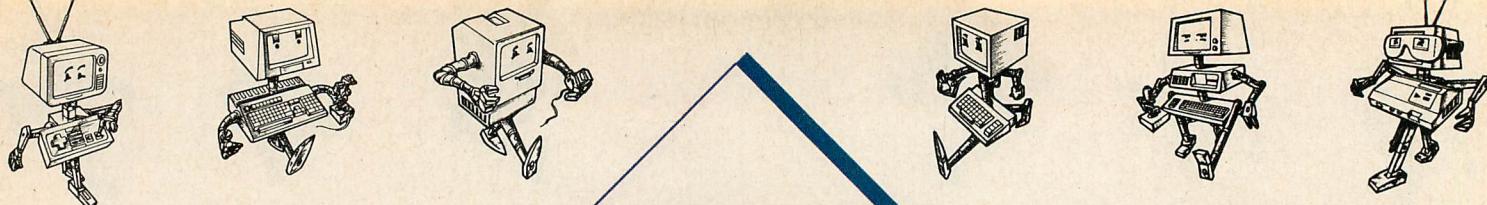
it's an excellent improvement over *Test Drive* and *Test Drive II*. And that's saying a fair bit.



Your precious, expensive car flies through the air. When it lands, your suspension probably won't be in great shape. Is this the way to treat a multimillion-dollar machine?



After finishing round 2, you're off to a land of hills and valleys. But at least you get your five lives back.



T

he claymation nemesis from the Domino's Pizza commercials is coming home to your Nintendo. In *Yo! Noid*, however, the Noid is the *good guy*.

The Noid's mission is to save New York City. New York is in trouble—which is supposed to be unusual in this game. Hooligans are everywhere and the Bronx is having a brownout. Somebody is responsible. Could it be the Noid's evil twin, Mr. Green?

As the Noid, you must work



During the park stage, use the Noid's skateboard defensively by keeping it between you and the enemy.

your way through 15 different sections of New York, from the docks up to the rooftops and beyond. Your only weapon is a yo-yo, which you can whip out in a devastating around-the-world twirl that stops the thugs who are trying to stop you.

You've got a few other tricks up your sleeve as well. The Noid has supernatural powers, and throughout the game you'll find magical scrolls that enhance those

NINTENDO

REVIEWS

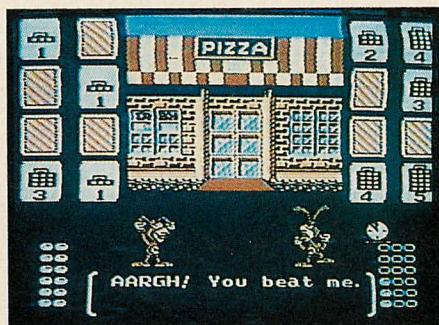
YO! NOID

Jeff Lundrigan

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Capcom USA, 3303 Scott Blvd., Santa Clara, CA 95054.

powers. The large scrolls reveal spells, and the small scrolls add to your magic energy.

To cast whatever spell you've picked up, just press down on the directional pad and hit the B button. Spells affect all enemies on the screen, though multiple enemies usually aren't a problem until the later stages of the game. Therefore, it's a good idea to save your spells for especially difficult places.



Pizza-eating contests follow every other stage. Usually the other Noid has to eat more than you do to win, so it's OK to concede a couple of rounds if you have to.

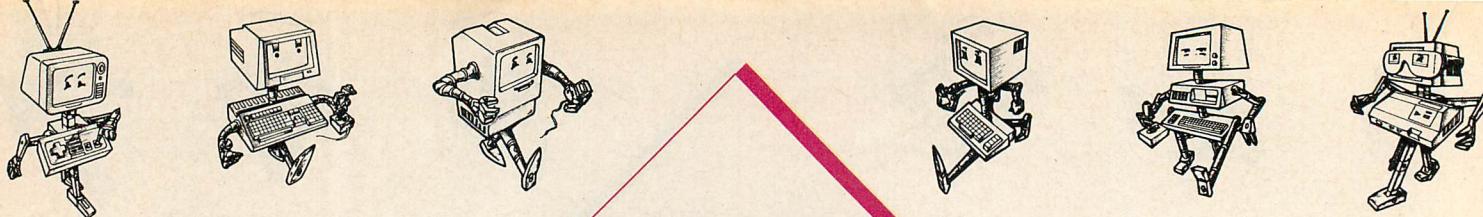


Besides his skateboard, the Noid has a couple of other devices to get around on, including this ornithopter.

Collecting spells and magic energy has other benefits, too. After every other stage, you must face the local Noid in a pizza-eating contest. To win these contests, it helps to have a few secret weapons — such as hot sauce or a pepper shaker — which prevent your opponent from finishing all of his pizza. The number of secret weapons you get depends on how many spells and scrolls you picked up in the previous stage.

While *Yo! Noid* doesn't take advantage of the Noid character for as much humor as it could, it still uses the character well. The game revolves around its central character more than some other Nintendo games. And while the graphics aren't spectacular, they're suitably cartoonish, and the action is fast and smooth with almost no flicker. Overall, *Yo! Noid* is a good, solid game.

GP

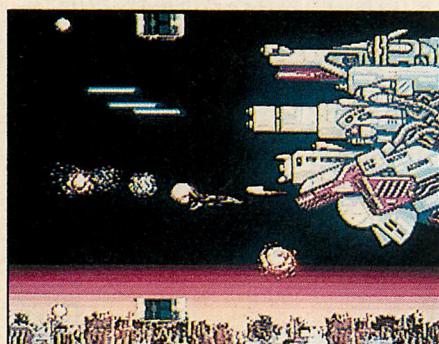


T

The title of this game tells you it won't be a peace mission. Still, as you pilot your supercharged fighter jet off the runway, you have no idea of the intense battles ahead. In moments, the friendly skies will be filled with odd-looking aircraft of various descriptions. For the next six stages, you'll be seeing quite a few of them.

There's no way to calculate how many bombs, bullets, and missiles are fired at you in *Aero Blasters* — numbers just don't run that high. Clearly, the game's designers were determined to cram every scrolling inch of screen space with more and more enemies armed with larger and deadlier weapons. In most sections of the game, you're being targeted from all directions at once.

Not that you're left helpless in this hostile airspace. The Aero Blaster is a nifty little jet, capable of fancy maneuvering and constant



It's painfully easy to get shot down in *Aero Blasters*. You'll know when it happens by the fire and smoke trailing your jet.

NEC REVIEWS

AERO BLASTERS

Phill Powell

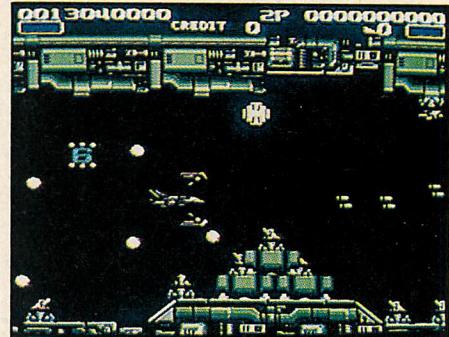
Version reviewed: NEC TurboGrafx-16. NEC Technologies, 1255 Michael Drive, Wood Dale, IL 60191.



Each of these symbols is a power-up left by a Weapon Transport Pod. Choose your weapon — or grab all four!

firing. Also, you can take advantage of the Weapon Transport Pods that appear throughout the game. WTPs resemble floating trash cans, but they actually contain power-ups. By collecting these special weapons, you can customize your Aero Blaster to make it more effective in the particular area you're flying through.

You begin the game by protecting the skies above a threatened city. Another stage takes you in-

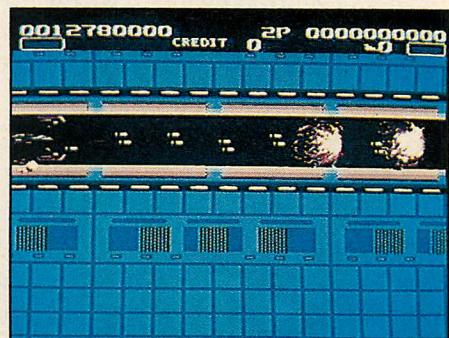


In the Mechanized Cave, you're surrounded by angry enemies, but you have even less space in which to avoid them.

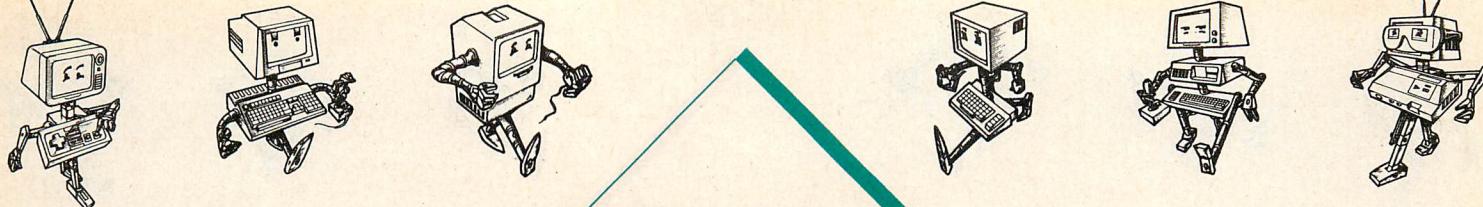
side a mechanized cave deep underground. You'll spend the latter part of the game in outer space and on other planets. The elaborate graphics help make it a detailed and colorful tour of duty. By demanding a variety of arcade skills, the game remains fresh throughout.

For one or two players, this is running and gunning of the first order. If you enjoy the thrill of aerial pursuit, *Aero Blasters* puts you in the thick of action and keeps you there until your teeth rattle.

GP



Some scenes require you to race through narrow tunnels at breakneck speed. Hit the walls and it's all she wrote!



NINTENDO REVIEWS

DICK TRACY

Lisa M. Bouchey

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Bandai America, 12851 East 166th Street, Cerritos, CA 90701.

The game has three different kinds of screens: overhead views of the city streets, side views of buildings, and information screens. The info screens include a notepad and a mug book, and you can call them up from any police station in the city.

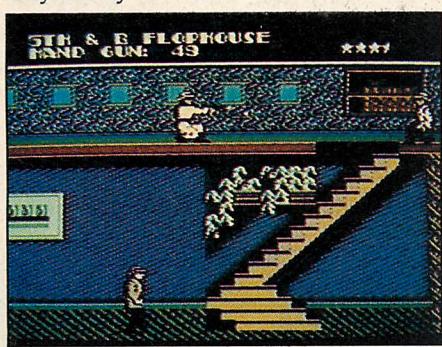
When the game begins, the notepad lists the crime you're currently investigating and any clues you've uncovered. When the notebook is full, you've collected enough evidence to arrest the prime suspect and advance to the next investigation.

If you're having trouble with a case, open the mug book for profiles on Big Boy's known accomplices and the locations where they were last seen. It might help you analyze a clue or find a criminal.

When you're ready to hit the pavement, the game shifts to an overhead view of the city. Sometimes you'll find yourself pursu-

ing criminals' cars through the streets. You have to riddle the cars with at least two dozen shots to stop them, but be careful. If your car is hit by too much return fire, you'll be pulled off the case.

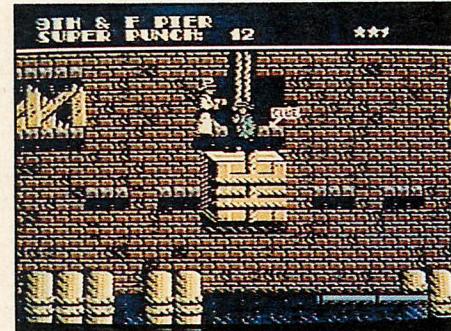
The game switches to a side view when you enter a building. You'll confront hostile dogs, rats, and bad guys. You can fire on the gun-toting criminals, but if you blast an unarmed bad guy, you'll lose one badge of energy. (You begin each case with four badges.)



You can fire on armed criminals, but you have limited ammunition. If you run out of bullets, pick up a new clip at a police station.



When your energy runs low, grab a heart to restore your energy to the four-badge level.



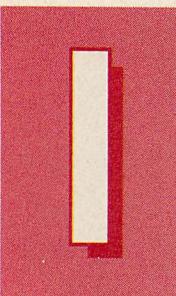
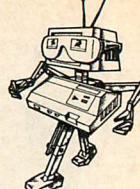
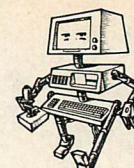
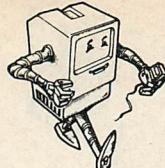
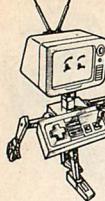
When you clear an area of thugs, you might find some evidence. All the clues are clearly marked, but some are well-guarded.

ing criminals' cars through the streets. You have to riddle the cars with at least two dozen shots to stop them, but be careful. If your car is hit by too much return fire, you'll be pulled off the case.

The game switches to a side view when you enter a building. You'll confront hostile dogs, rats, and bad guys. You can fire on the gun-toting criminals, but if you blast an unarmed bad guy, you'll lose one badge of energy. (You begin each case with four badges.)

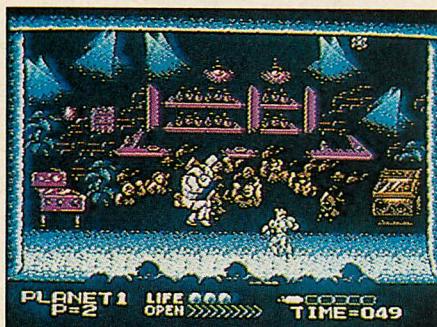
When you clear an area of thugs, you'll find evidence pointing to a suspect you must interrogate. When you arrest the guilty criminal, he's locked behind bars and you get the first clue for the next crime.

Dick Tracy is an action-adventure game that's a step above the average shoot-em-up. The graphics are crisp and clean — if a bit repetitious — and the crime-solving puzzles add a nice twist to the usual kill-or-be-killed cops and robbers game.



It's not often that you meet someone who's a kung fu expert, a world-champion street fighter, and a groundbreaking scientist all rolled into one. But that's a perfect description of Ken, the hero of *Streetfighter 2010—The Final Fight*.

After defeating all of the world's greatest street fighters, Ken turned his attention to academics. Working in the field of cybotics (cybernetic robotics?), Ken and his best friend Troy perfected cytoplasm — a substance that could make a person several times



This Basher tries to crush you by swinging from an invisible wire.

stronger than normal.

Their discovery came just as mankind was beginning to travel to new worlds, where strength could mean the difference between life and death. Though happy his formula had proven useful, Ken had no desire to travel to these new planets — until the formula for cytoplasm was stolen and Troy was murdered.

From its title, you'd probably

NINTENDO REVIEWS

STREETFIGHTER 2010

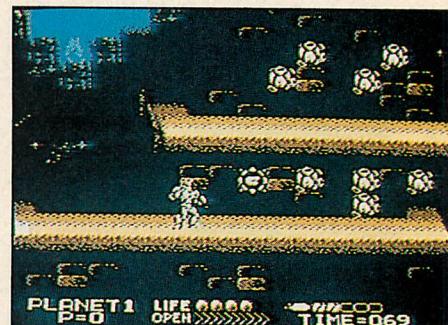
Stephen Poole

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Capcom, 3303 Scott Blvd., Santa Clara, CA 95054.

expect *Streetfighter 2010* to be another furious exercise in fisticuffs, and you'd be partly right. Ken's primary weapons are his feet and hands, the game puts a premium on fast reflexes and good timing, and you have to battle your way through a seemingly endless number of enemies.

But a couple of things set it apart from the usual punch-and-kick games. The screens scroll both horizontally and vertically, and if you don't keep up with them, it's curtains for Ken. Also, most of your enemies are repulsive (and persistent) alien life forms instead of the human punks and villains found in most martial-arts games.

When Ken begins each life, his punches and kicks have a very short range. You won't get very far unless you find power-ups to increase this range, because getting close to any foe almost certainly



Smash as many round pods as you can to uncover power-up capsules.

means taking a hit. Just a few power-ups increase Ken's lethal range quite a bit. Eventually, it looks as if Ken is firing a weapon when he unleashes his blows.

Streetfighter 2010 has unlimited continues, and for good reason. Capcom recommends this game for advanced players, but even they will probably have their hands full.

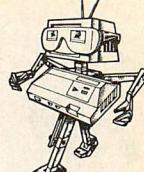
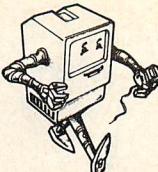
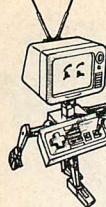
The game's story is odd — how many kung fu masters are scien-



These limbs are like a trampoline — use them to spring away from the hunter drones.

tists? — but if you like arcade-style games with plenty of action and challenge, you won't be disappointed with *Streetfighter 2010*.

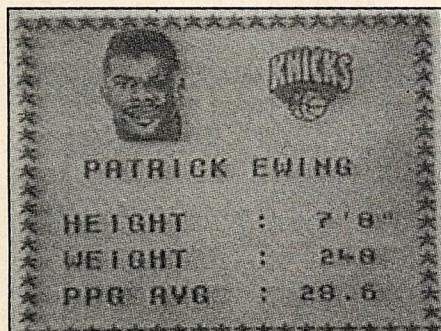
GP



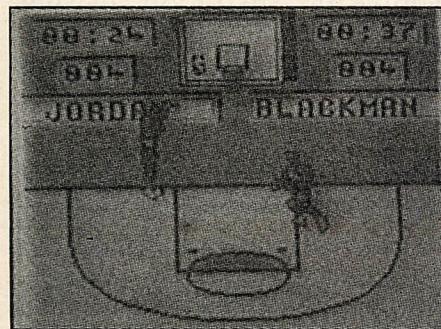
BA All-Star Challenge packs a powerful one-two punch: It's a realistic basketball game played

by some of the National Basketball Association's greatest names. Roundball fans won't be disappointed with this latest Game Boy offering from LJN.

NBA All-Star lets you choose from four different variations: a one-on-one match between two NBA players; an accuracy shoot-out; a friendly game of H-O-R-S-E; or a free-throw contest.



The roster in *NBA All-Star Challenge* includes 27 NBA greats.



Michael Jordan goes up for an easy two-pointer against Rolando Blackman.

GAME BOY REVIEWS

NBA ALL-STAR CHALLENGE

Brian Carroll

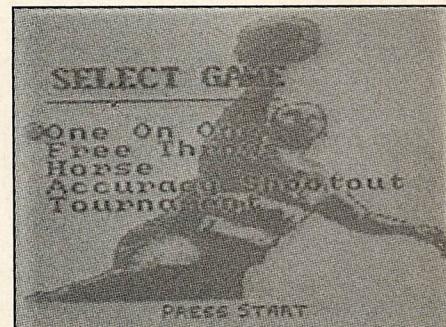
Version reviewed: Game Boy. LJN, 1 Spring Street, Oyster Bay, NY 11771

Not surprisingly, the one-on-one game is *NBA All-Star*'s most entertaining challenge. You can select two actual NBA players from the 27-man roster and then try to guide one of them to victory. Your opponent can be controlled by either a friend or the computer.

Although familiarity with NBA players isn't necessary, it definitely helps. For instance, if your friend chooses Danny Ainge, it would be a good idea to pick another three-point threat, like Larry Bird or Kelly Tripucka.

It also helps to know each player's strengths and weaknesses before you hit the court. If you choose Patrick Ewing, for example, your best strategy is to get inside the paint and take the easy layups.

Unfortunately, two of basketball's best are absent from the *NBA All-Star* roster: Magic Johnson, last year's most valuable



You can choose from four different tests of basketball ability.

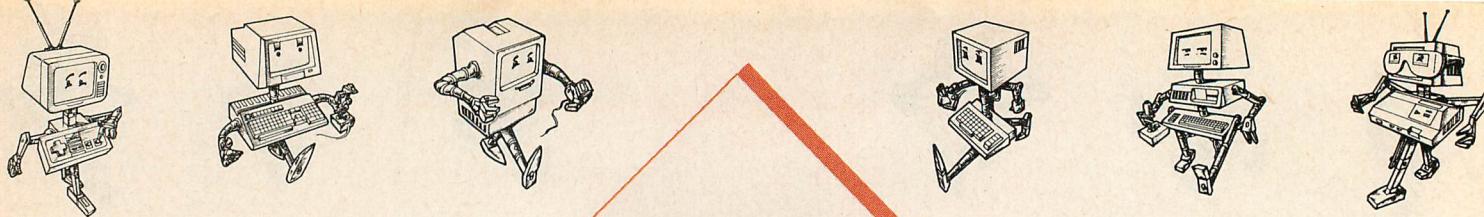
player, and David Robinson, last season's rookie of the year.

Despite the Game Boy's limitations, *NBA All-Star* does a fine job of conveying the excitement of a good game of basketball. The characters are easily distinguishable on the small LCD screen. Unfortunately, they dwarf the tiny basketball court. This means you don't have a lot of floor space on which to move around.

Nevertheless, *NBA All-Star* is well-suited to the Game Boy. Since people often use their Game Boys on the go, quest games aren't always the best kinds of games to take along. Sports games, on the other hand, tend to be more flexible. *NBA All-Star* allows you to set time limits for your one-on-one games (2, 5, 8, or 12 minutes) or play until someone scores a predetermined number of points.

Thanks to *NBA All-Star Challenge*, now you can hold your own with the NBA's best players — the Game Boy shrinks them all down to size.

GP



S

Snake Rattle N Roll appears to be designed for gamers of the younger set. Look at it—cute little snakes slithering around for food.

It's got to be simple, right?

Wrong! Don't be fooled. Once this intriguing game sinks its fangs into you, it just won't let go. It requires you to simultaneously collect various items, perform risky maneuvers, and race against the clock. If its dynamic graphics don't overwhelm you, its increasing level of difficulty probably will.

You control a serpent named Rattle (his friend, Roll, joins the game only in the two-player mode), and you're journeying up a mountain on your way to the moon. As each level begins, your snake starts with nothing but a head. Meanwhile, convenient dispensers are shooting out Nibbley Pibbleys, energy balls that bounce and dart around. By chasing and devouring the Nibbleys, you can add segments to your tail.



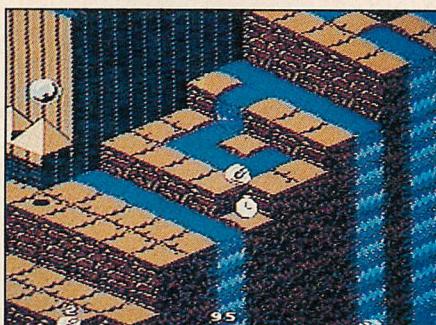
At the end of each level, hop on the scale for your weigh-in. The door out of this level is at the upper right.

NINTENDO REVIEWS

SNAKE RATTLE N ROLL

Phill Powell

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Nintendo of America, 4820 150th Avenue N.E., Redmond, WA 98052.



Time is crucial in this game, and clocks are worth an extra 25 seconds. This one's out on a ledge, so be careful.

Eat enough Nibbleys and you can advance to the next level (there are 11 in all). That is, if you can avoid the booby traps and other nuisances.

The terrain works against you, too. *Snake Rattle N Roll* resembles the world of *Marble Madness*—elaborate platforms and ramps viewed from a 3-D perspective. The graphics pack a strong visual effect, and the dense landscapes are your greatest challenge. Each level is



Snake Rattle N Roll demands expert jumping. The jump that takes you out of level 4 is one of the easier ones.

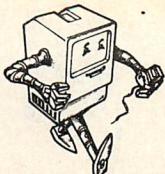
loaded with waterfalls, cliffs, and ledges. Later stages take you through underwater caverns and ice kingdoms.

Adapting to these different challenges demands new skills, such as swimming underwater and scaling slippery ice hills. Although you don't get a chance to practice, the game does give you two continues. You'll need them, as well as the hidden bonus continues.

Eliminating opponents isn't the central goal in *Snake Rattle N Roll*. In fact, there aren't any lengthy battle stages. The enemies you face are pesky but easy to destroy; their role is merely to slow you down. Getting through each level is the whole point, and it's also the main source of frustration. In some places, the multilayered backgrounds are almost impossible to navigate.

For a game that seems so simple, *Snake Rattle N Roll* is surprisingly inventive and engaging. Try telling yourself it's just a kiddie game when you're perched on a mountain ledge, only a short slither away from certain doom.

GP



SEGA

REVIEWS

COLUMNS

Tom R. Halfhill

Version reviewed: Sega Genesis.
Sega of America, 573 Forbes Blvd.,
South San Francisco, CA 94080.

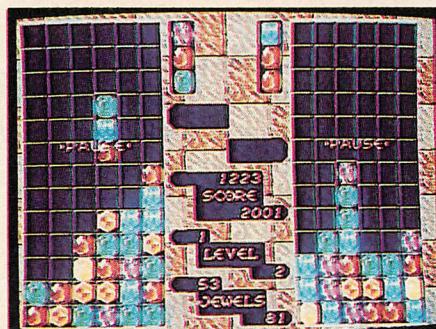
as *Klax*, another *Tetris* variant for the Genesis. But then, *Klax* might be a little *too* different for *Tetris* fans who can't buy the Soviet puzzle game for their Genesis systems and want the next best thing.



Look familiar? Unlike *Tetris*, however, the goal in *Columns* is to form a matching row of at least three colored blocks in any direction.

Columns sticks much closer to the proven formula. Colored objects gradually fall from the top of the screen, and you have to arrange them in patterns at the bottom of the screen to make them disappear. The longer you can keep the objects from piling up to the top of the screen, the longer the game lasts and the more points you score.

But unlike the variety of geometric shapes that descend in *Tetris*, the falling objects in *Columns* are all the same shape — vertical columns made of three colored



If you have two controllers, the two-player mode allows you to go head-to-head against an opponent.

blocks. You can't rotate these objects as you can in *Tetris*, but you can change the position of the colored blocks within each column. And unlike *Tetris*, your goal isn't to form unbroken horizontal rows across the bottom of the screen, but rather to form matching rows of colored blocks. When you line up three or more blocks of the same color vertically, horizontally, or diagonally, they disappear and you get points.

If any blocks are stacked atop



In this variation of the basic game, your goal is to reach a flashing block buried at the bottom of the screen. A clock measures how long you take.

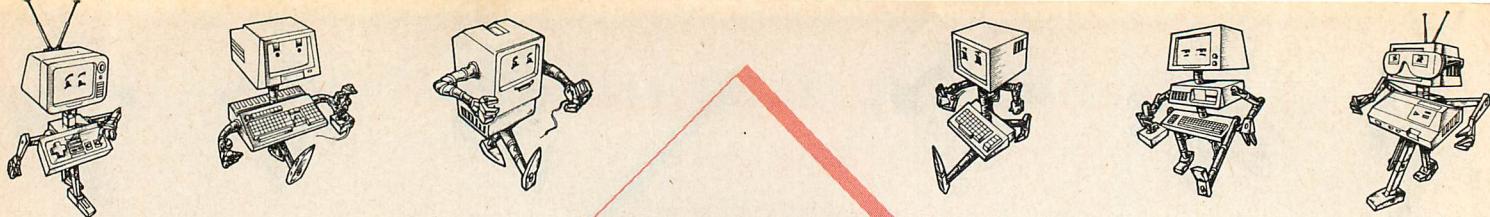
the ones that disappeared, they'll fall downward to fill the gaps. Sometimes this triggers a chain reaction — new rows of matching blocks are formed, then disappear, thus causing more blocks to fall, and so forth. There's also a "wild card" column that eliminates all blocks of whatever color it lands on.

Basically, that's it. *Columns* does offer a few variations on the standard game, though. Two people can play simultaneously, and another mode lets you race against a timer while trying to uncover a flashing block buried beneath regular blocks at the bottom of the screen.

Perhaps the best new feature of *Columns* is the background music. You can choose from three different tunes, all much better than the average videogame soundtrack.

In short, *Columns* holds few surprises. It won't win any points for massive originality, but if you want to play *Tetris* on your Genesis, this is as close as you're likely to get.

GP

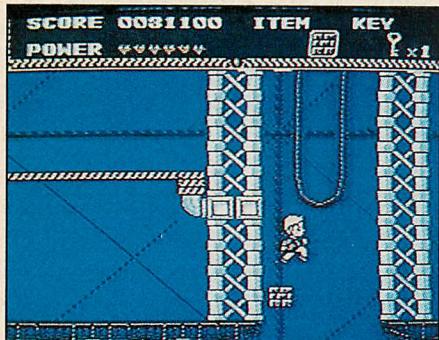


E

everybody loves the circus — funny clowns, brave animal tamers, and fearless acrobats all under one big-top tent. In

Circus Caper, Tim and Judy can't wait to see the show when the circus comes to town. But this troupe is led by an evil ringmaster, Mr. Magic. He kidnaps Judy, and with a nasty chuckle tells Tim that he'll never see his little sister again.

You play the role of Tim as he races to outwit the sinister magician. If you don't save Judy, the



You can't destroy enemies with the blocks you collect, but you can use them to jump to places that are normally out of reach.

circus thugs will use her as a knife-throwing target.

Circus Caper has six acts (stages) you must survive before making the rescue. Fortunately, you won't go unarmed. Each time you defeat an enemy, you get a chance to grab power items and weapons.

The yo-yo may be the best weapon to use against the clowns in the first act. It revolves around

NINTENDO REVIEWS

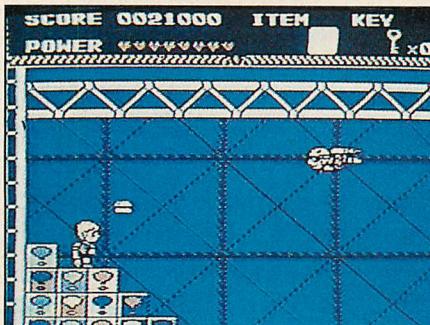
CIRCUS CAPER

Lisa M. Bouchey

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Toho, 2049 Century Park East, Suite 490, Los Angeles, CA 90067.

Tim and destroys enemies as they approach. If you find yourself without a weapon, try kicking and punching your way past the bad guys. To advance to the next act, you must get by the stage boss, Rolopoly the clown.

In the air above the center ring, you'll fight trapeze artists and a monkey named Leonard. If you can outfox the tightrope walker, you'll find yourself backstage in a maze filled with egg-walkers and



Hamburgers and pieces of cake restore your power and life, but make sure you catch them before they hit the ground.



The bosses from each act make a final appearance in the last scene of the game. If you can get by them one more time, you'll face Mr. Magic.

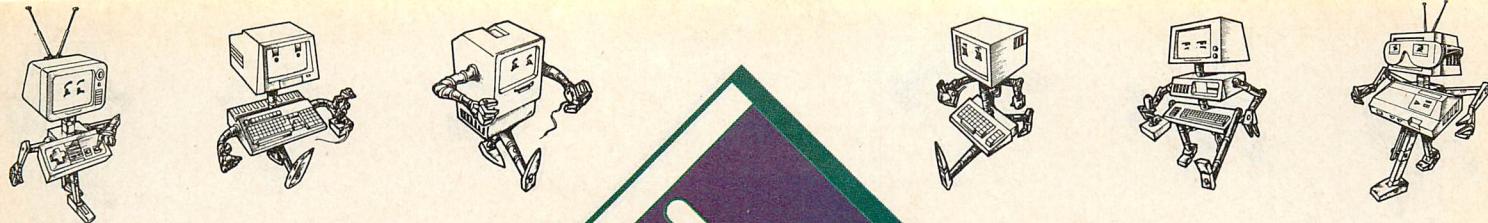
hammer-throwers. Gamran, the white tiger, also lurks in the labyrinth. If you defeat him, he'll give you a key to the lion cage.

Soccer balls make good weapons when you advance to the animal cage. The balls roll along the contours of the tent and knock baby elephants and lions out of your way. But you'll have a tougher time getting rid of Ivanov the animal trainer and Spanky the bear.

Before your final showdown with Mr. Magic, you'll once again face all of the bosses you've already defeated in previous acts. Get by them as quickly as possible, because the master magician has some tricks up his sleeve.

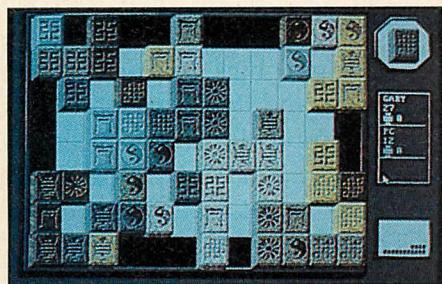
The simple graphics and plot make *Circus Caper* a good game for younger players. The graphics may be a little *too* simple for older gamers, but controlling your character is a challenge that makes the game worth playing.

GP

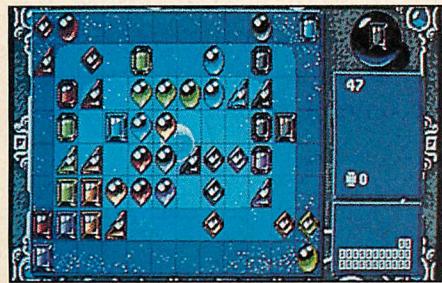


Take a look at the shelves of your favorite software store: The majority of new games for sale are either edge-of-your-seat role-playing adventures or action-packed simulators. If you prefer games that are more contemplative, take another look to find *Ishido: The Way of Stones*.

Ishido is an amalgam of many games from many cultures, based on traditions that go back thousands of years. Its primary inspiration, though, is drawn from the games of ancient China. *Ishido* is a very simple game to learn that nonetheless requires a subtle strategy reminiscent of chess.



Several possible four-way matches are just waiting for the right stones.



Some stone sets are distinguished by shapes instead of symbols, as with these jewels.



REVIEWS

ISHIDO: THE WAY OF STONES

Gary Meredith

Version reviewed: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory (640K for Tandy 16-color graphics); CGA, EGA, MCGA, VGA, Tandy 16-color, or Hercules graphics (hard drive or 3.5-inch floppy drive required for VGA); mouse optional. Accolade, 550 S. Winchester Blvd., San Jose, CA 95128.

Each player (you can challenge another person or the computer) works with a pouch of 72 pieces called stones. Each stone is decorated with one of six colors and one of six symbols. You take turns placing the stones one by one on the game board in order to match colors and/or symbols with as many other stones as possible.

If you match two stones of the same color or the same symbol, it's called a two-way. A three-way requires matching two colors and one symbol, or two symbols and one color. A four-way — the ultimate goal — requires matching two colors and two symbols. That's really tough, but the game puts a

big premium on four-ways, especially consecutive matches.

Ishido has stunning graphics, particularly for a board game. You can choose from a number of different boards and stone sets (such as runes or hieroglyphs), which makes this game a visual as well as a mental feast.

There are also several play and scoring options. In the "ancient" variation of the game, the object is

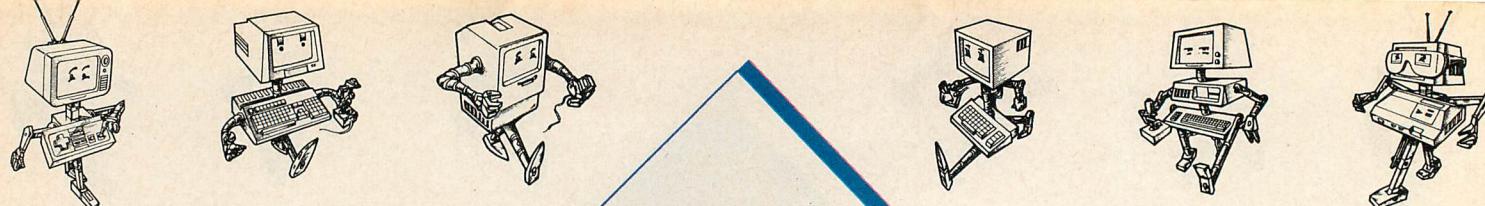


To score points, matches must be made only on the lighter-colored inner squares of the board. (These stones, by the way, depict ancient Germanic runes.)

to place as many stones on the board as possible, leading to a more slowly paced and contemplative game. In the "modern" variation, the object is to score as many points as possible (which, for some, may detract from the game's charm). You can also set time limits for moves.

If your nerves have been frayed by the games you've been playing, perhaps a few hours with *Ishido: The Way of Stones* is just what you need to put everything into perspective.

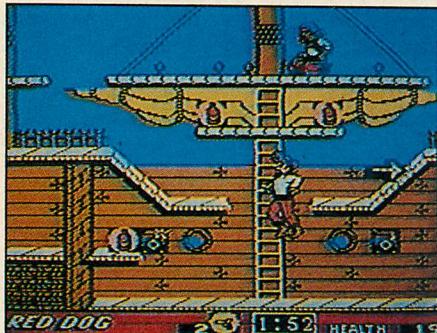
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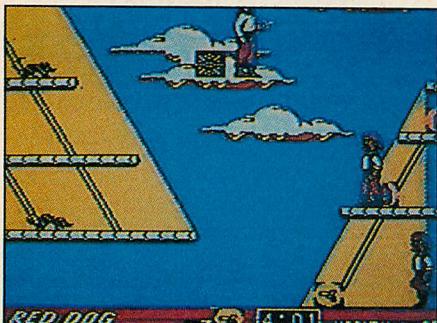
S

Skull and Crossbones is an action-packed quest adventure for one or two players. It's about two pirates, Red Dog and One Eye, who sail in search of treasure while guarding a beautiful princess. Then the Evil Wizard (how's that for an original name?) bewitches them with a spell and kidnaps the princess (not to mention an original concept!). The two pirates (or one pirate, in a single-player game) set out to find her and avenge their tarnished honor.

To complete this adventure, you must clear six stages and sur-



Most of the screens are so busy that the two-player mode is definitely recommended for survival.



Booty appears in unlikely places—clouds, for instance.

NINTENDO REVIEWS

SKULL AND CROSSBONES

William R. Trotter

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Broderbund, 17 Paul Drive, San Rafael, CA 94903.

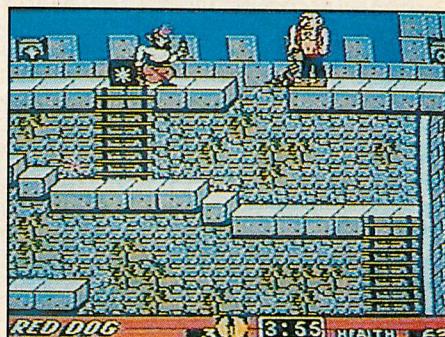
vive a final showdown on Wizard's Isle. The six stages are arranged on a map screen, with the easiest one to the left and the most difficult on the right. You can play them in any order you want.

In each stage, you must not only defeat lots of enemies — both human and supernatural — but also collect booty. Later, if you clear the stage, you can trade the booty for valuable weapons.

One player can tackle this game alone, but Tengen recommends the two-player mode, and we strongly agree. The screens in *Skull and Crossbones* are extremely busy. They're filled with enemies trying to kill you, objects you must grab, and places where you must jump to avoid losing a life. Our game testers found it difficult — and on some screens, virtually impossible — for a single player to maneuver,

fight, and grab all of the necessary booty. In the two-player mode, however, one person can do most of the shooting while the other concentrates on picking up the objects.

In the single-player mode, you get five continues. In the two-player mode, the five continues are shared by both players. Health points and extra lives are sometimes available as bonuses.

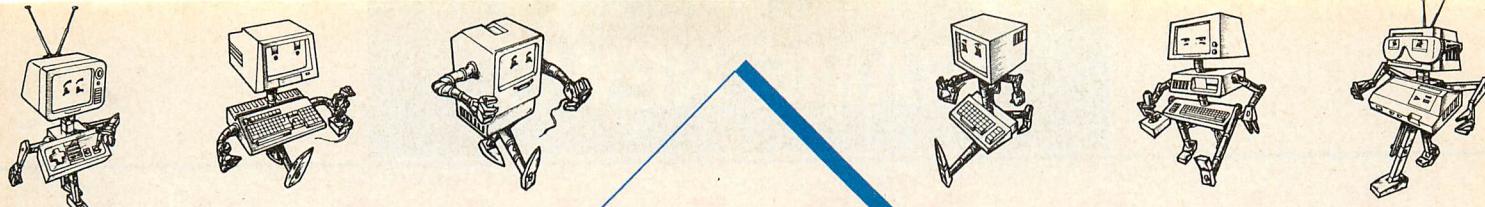


It's hazardous to go near cannon muzzles, but that's often where the best booty can be found.

The graphics are bright and cartoony, and the whole game has a fresh, appealing style. Basically, though, *Skull and Crossbones* is a fast and furious action game that values quick reflexes and sharp coordination over good strategy.

Many people will find *Skull and Crossbones* frustratingly difficult when played alone. With two players, however, it turns into a better, more balanced game and becomes a lot more fun to play.

GP



NINTENDO

REVIEWS

LITTLE NEMO: THE DREAM MASTER

Richard Lashley

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Capcom USA, 3303 Scott Blvd., Santa Clara, CA 95054.

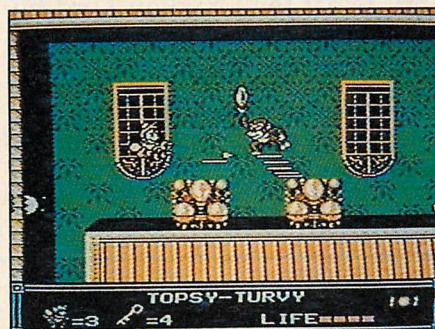
In *Little Nemo: The Dream Master*, a turn-of-the-century comic strip character leaps off the page and into a Nintendo game. As Little Nemo, a sleeping kid in a nightshirt, you'll take an imaginative journey into the fantasy world of Slumberland. But leave your machine guns and guided missiles at home — Little Nemo deals with danger by tossing candy and transforming himself into various animals.



Carefully pick which animals can reach the hidden, magical keys in the Night Sea of dream 4.

In a market glutted with shoot-em-up games, *Little Nemo* is a gentler pastime. The strategy and action are well-balanced. To finish each dream (stage), you have to collect a certain number of magical keys. That may sound simple, but swarms of army ants and other pesky crawlies are out to get you.

By tossing three candies at a friendly creature, such as a frog, Nemo gains the animal's strengths and weaknesses. The trick to winning is to learn how to use each kind of animal to reach the magical



Watch out for the dish-throwing monkeys in dream 7's Topsy-Turvy World!

keys. Some parts of the game, such as the end of the Mushroom Forest, test your ability to overcome obstacles while dodging enemies and stunning them with candy.

Your final goal is to free King Morpheus. The king's daughter, Princess Camille, gives you the powerful Morning Star wand before you enter Knightmare Land in dream 8. Use the wand to battle the two bosses in that stage.

The toughest boss, the demonic king of Knightmare Land, lurks at the end of the game. He's beatable, but it takes persistence. (Try standing in the left corner of the screen and striking him with full-power blasts from the wand. Your position allows you to dodge his red blobs by jumping in one direction, then scampering in another.)

Top-notch graphics add to the excitement of each dream. The chugging train in the House of Toys and the brilliant fire walls in Knightmare Land are especially nice touches.



The dangerous fire walls in dream 8 show off the top-notch graphics in *Little Nemo*.

Coordination and timing are a must in *Little Nemo*. The game gradually becomes more difficult as your adventures take you deeper into Slumberland. Overall, *Little Nemo* should appeal to both intermediate and advanced players. Experienced gamers will probably consider the first seven dreams as a warm-up for the shadowy evil in Knightmare Land.

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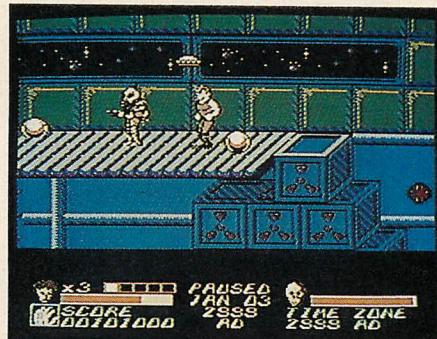
A N D P R E V I E W S

LET'S DO THE TIME WARP

The year is 2999, and the evil warriors of Drakkon have gained control of a powerful time machine. Now they plan to conquer Earth by fighting a war on a unique battlefield — Earth's past. By going back in time and changing crucial moments of history, the Drakkons can easily take control of Earth's governments and people.

In Milton Bradley's new Nintendo game, *Time Lord*, you are a planet-hopping mercenary hired by the desperate scientists of the MB Time Travel Research Center. Your mission is to travel through time and stop the Drakkons' de-ranged plans.

You do battle in four different locations and eras of history — on a pirate ship in 1650, in war-torn



A Drakkon foe faces a "timely" death in Milton Bradley's *Time Lord*.

France in 1943, in the American West of 1860, and at Castle Harman in 1250 England. In each era, you must gather weapons, discover five mysterious time-traveling orbs, and defeat the Drakkon Lord before advancing to the next time period. Finally, you return to 2999, where Earth's past, present, and future will be decided as you face the mighty Drakkon King.

GAME BOY GETS SERIOUS

Nintendo's Game Boy isn't just for games anymore. GameTek has announced *InfoGenius*, the first non-entertainment product for a handheld videogame machine. *InfoGenius* is a series of Productivity Pak cartridges that includes a spelling checker, dictionary, encyclopedia, and thesaurus. Additional cartridges will feature personal organizers and health and fitness information.

GameTek is also planning to introduce language translator cartridges for the Game Boy. The first ones will be English-Spanish and English-French translators.

FUTURISTIC ROLLER DERBY

In the 21st century, terrorist groups have become strapped for funds. This is upsetting the plans of VIPER (Vicious International Punks and Eternal Renegades) to dominate the world. As a result, VIPER has decided to infiltrate RollerGames, a popular spectator sport, and win the huge cash prize. Thus begins *RollerGames*, a new Nintendo title from Ultra.

VIPER enters three teams in the RollerGames tournament and captures the sport's commissioner, Emerson "Skeeter" Bankhead. It's

up to you, the RollerGames champion, to protect the prize money and save Commissioner Skeeter.

As you skate through six stages, you must overcome oil slicks, open manholes, skateboard goons, and motorcycle thugs. Eventually you'll find the gang's headquarters — the VIPER Pit. But winning the final battle won't be a skate in the park.



Skillful skating is the key to victory in Ultra's *RollerGames*.

A N D P R E V I E W S

STELLAR 7 RETURNS FOR PC'S

Dynamix is releasing an updated version of the classic computer game *Stellar 7* for PC compatibles. First released in 1983, *Stellar 7* has been upgraded with 256-color VGA graphics and an original stereo soundtrack.

Stellar 7 is a futuristic arcade game in which you are Earth's only hope of defeating the invading Arcturan forces. You command the world's most sophisticated fighting machine in a battle that spans seven different planets. Ultimately you must face a terrifying showdown with the dreaded Supreme Overlord of the Arcturan Empire.

The new version of *Stellar 7* features digitized graphics, 15 original songs, numerous sound effects, support for many different sound boards, and optional control by keyboard, mouse, or joystick.



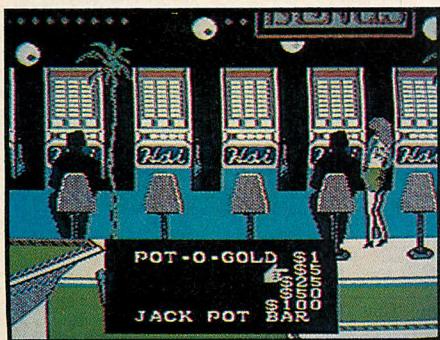
Destroy the evil Arcturans in *Stellar 7* from Dynamix.

BEAT THE ODDS
IN VEGAS DREAM

Live life in the fast lane and break the bank in Hal America's *Vegas Dream*, a casino simulation for Nintendo. The Hal Palace Hotel

casino offers four Vegas games of chance: roulette, keno, blackjack, and a slot machine. Starting with \$700, you try to beat the odds and win the \$10 million jackpot.

Buy some chips, choose your game, and place your bet, including side bets with fellow gamblers. All of the games have realistic odds and are played by casino rules. But don't get so caught up in the gambling that you forget to take a break from the tables and meet the interesting regulars who hang around the casino.



Visit a simulated casino in *Vegas Dream*.

CASTLEVANIA
SWEEPSTAKES

If you enter Konami's new vacation getaway sweepstakes, you could win a trip to a beautiful, historic European castle. There's only one catch — it's Dracula's castle.

To promote *Castlevania III: Dracula's Curse*, the latest installment in the popular *Castlevania* series, Konami will send one lucky winner and three friends on an all-expense-paid trip to Transylvania. They'll stay at what was once the castle of Vlad the Impaler, the butchering tyrant who inspired the Dracula legend.

Runners-up will receive the original film version of *Dracula* or copies of *Simon's Quest: Castlevania II* and *Castlevania*, the first two games in the series. If you want a chance to win this unholy holiday, entry forms can be found at retail stores, in advertisements, and in the *Castlevania III* game box. Winners will be determined by a random drawing.



Win a trip to Transylvania in Konami's *Castlevania III* contest.

A N D P R E V I E W S

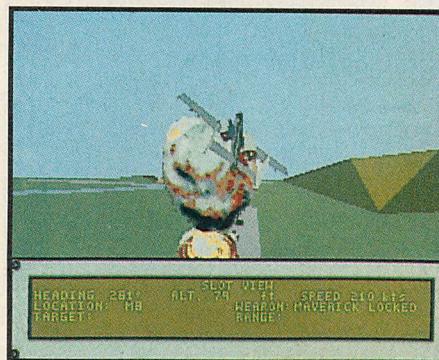
A-10 TANK KILLER HITS AMIGA

You've earned the right to be a Flying Tiger and sit in the hot seat of the Fairchild/Republic A-10 Tank Killer Ground Support Plane. Armed with an awesome array of weapons, your mission is to protect ground troops from enemy tanks.

In *A-10 Tank Killer*, a new Amiga flight simulator from Dynamix, you are Captain Buck Ryan of the Flying Tigers. You must successfully fly your A-10 on seven dangerous missions against enemy forces. Although your plane is armed with 30mm cannons and 16,000 pounds of laser-guided missiles and bombs, you must also use cunning and tactics to intercept radio messages, adapt

to the environment, and plan surprise attacks.

In addition to the seven standard missions, *A-10 Tank Killer* also has a campaign mode that simulates extended warfare. An accessory disk is available with seven more battles.



Hunt down enemy armor in *A-10 Tank Killer* from Dynamix.

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